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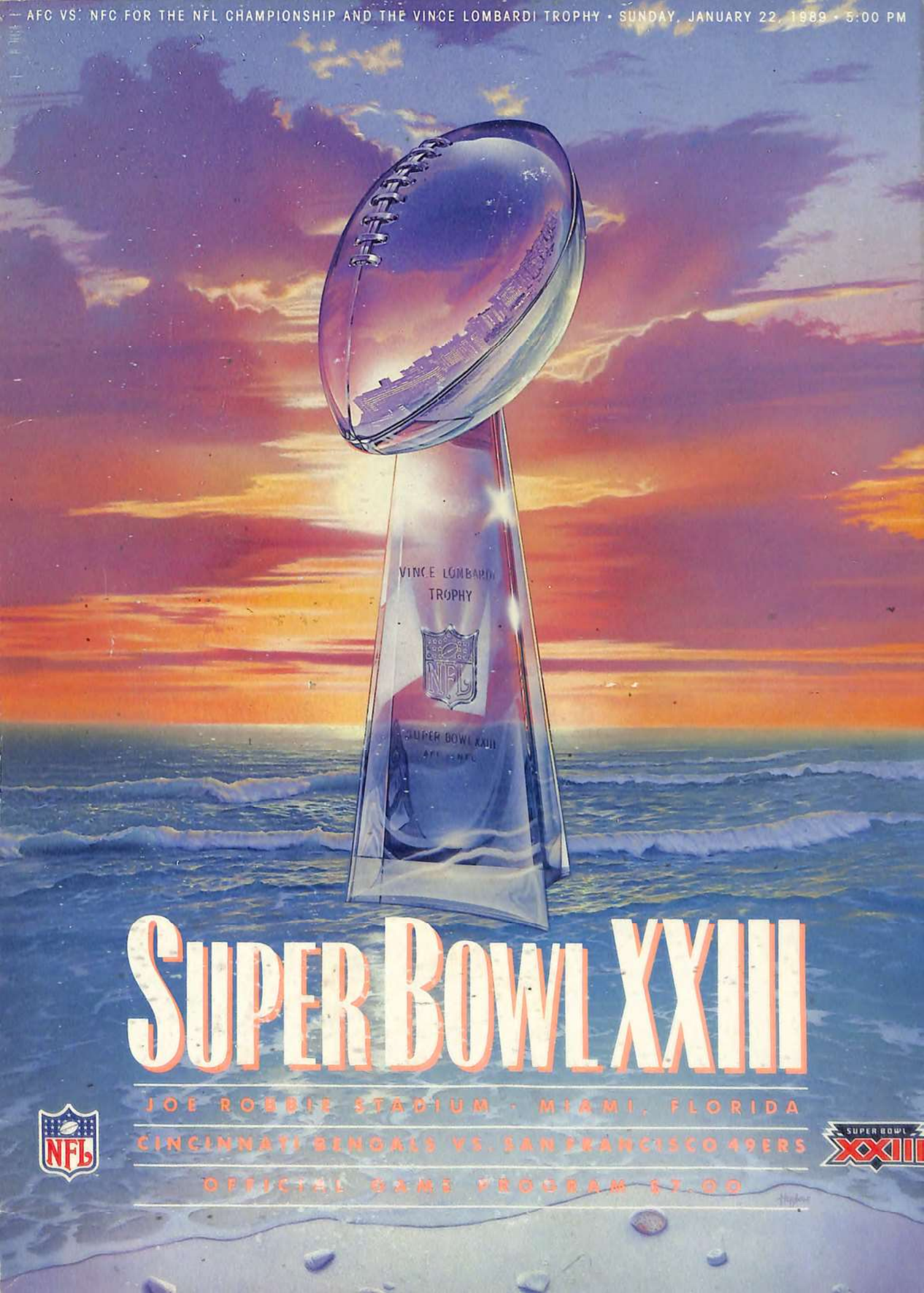

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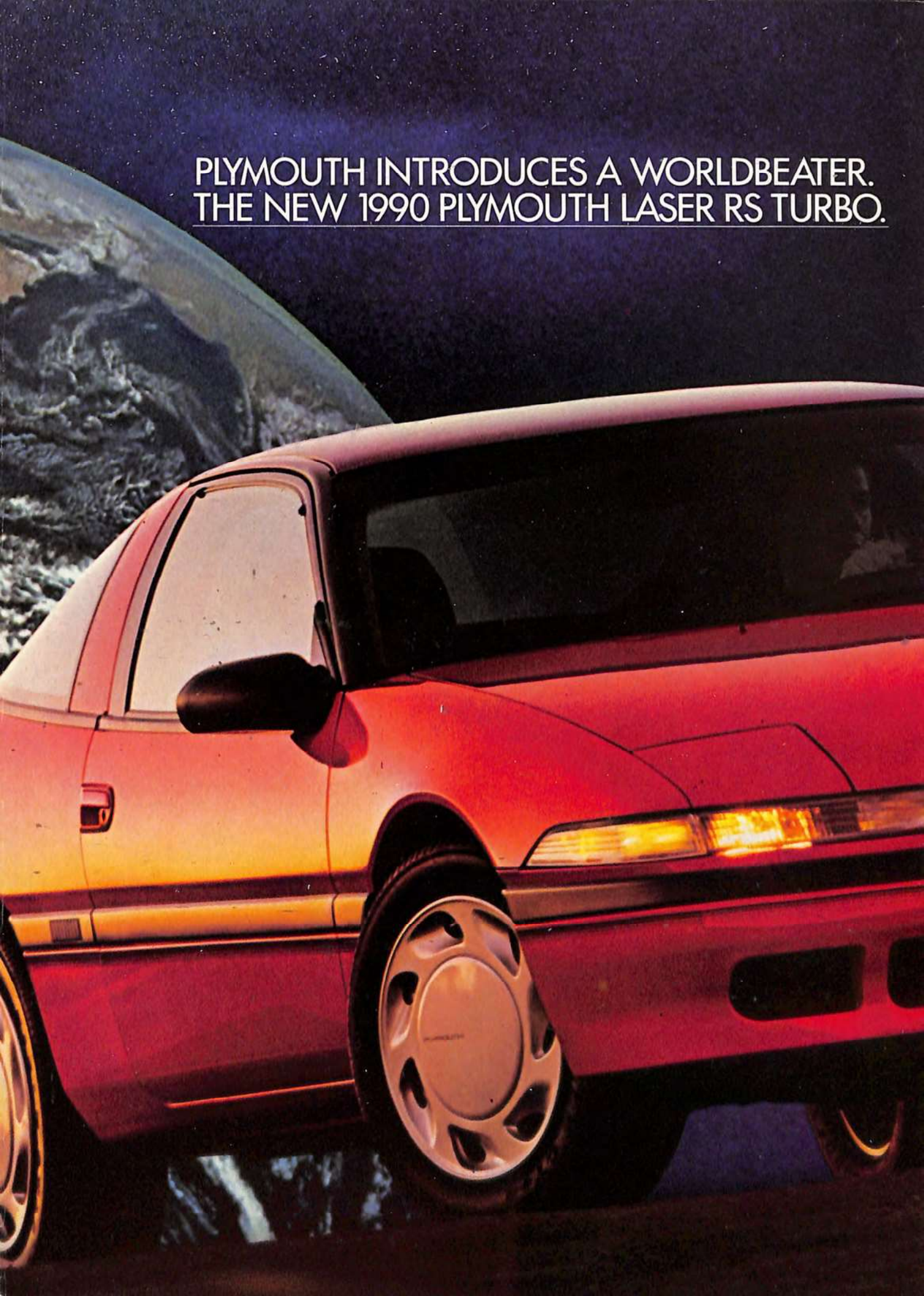

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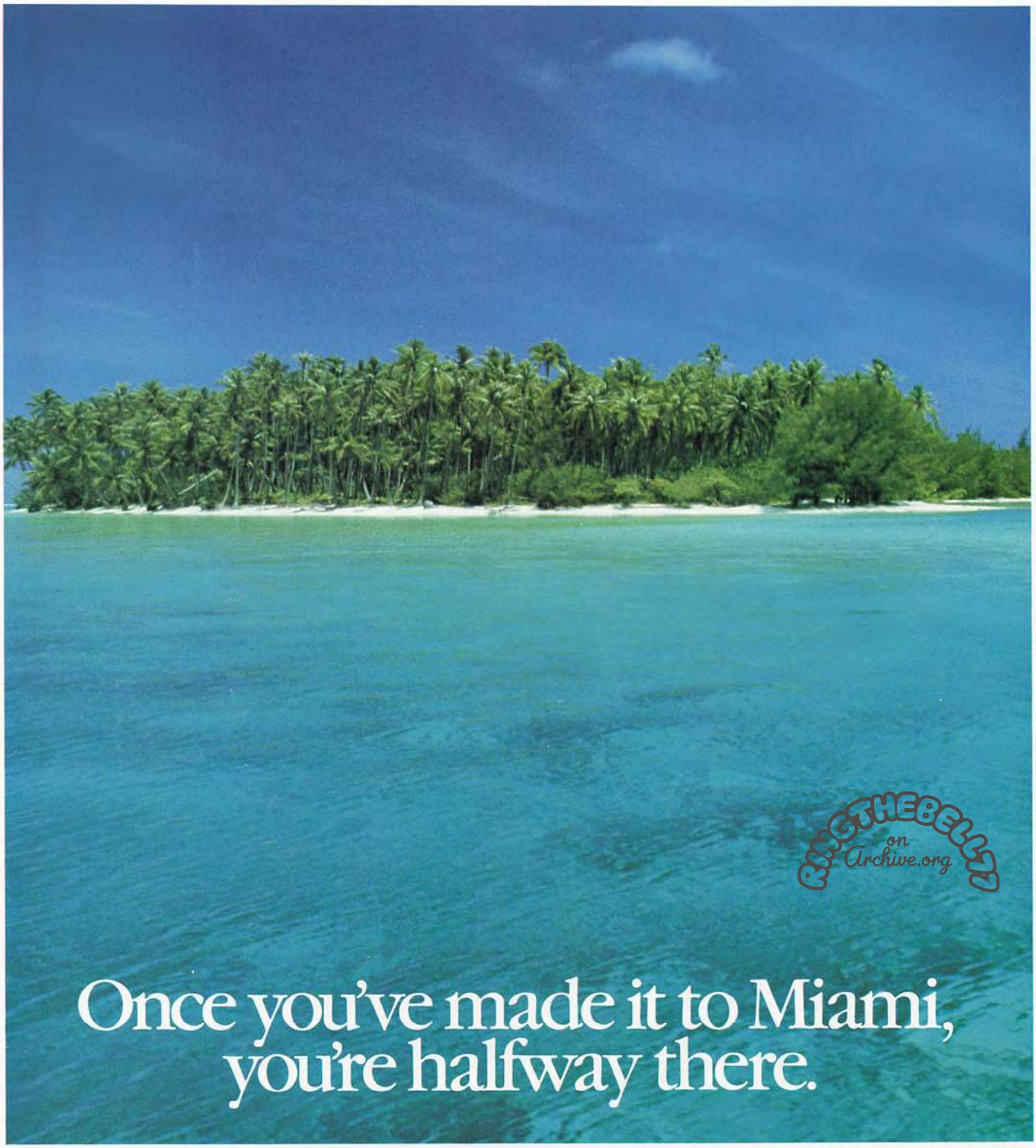

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Joe Namath said these bold words before Super Bowl III, then went out and led his underdog New York Jets to a 16-7 conquest of the Baltimore Colts in the game that made the American Football League.
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Your up-to-date guide to Super Bowl XXIII—all the facts, along with the schedule of today's pregame and halftime events.
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PERFECT DOLPHINS

The 1972 Miami Dolphins are the only team in the history of the NFL to go through an entire season—including the playoffs—without a defeat or tie. A boys-of-autumn visit with eight members of a remarkable team, and a chart that tells where they are now.
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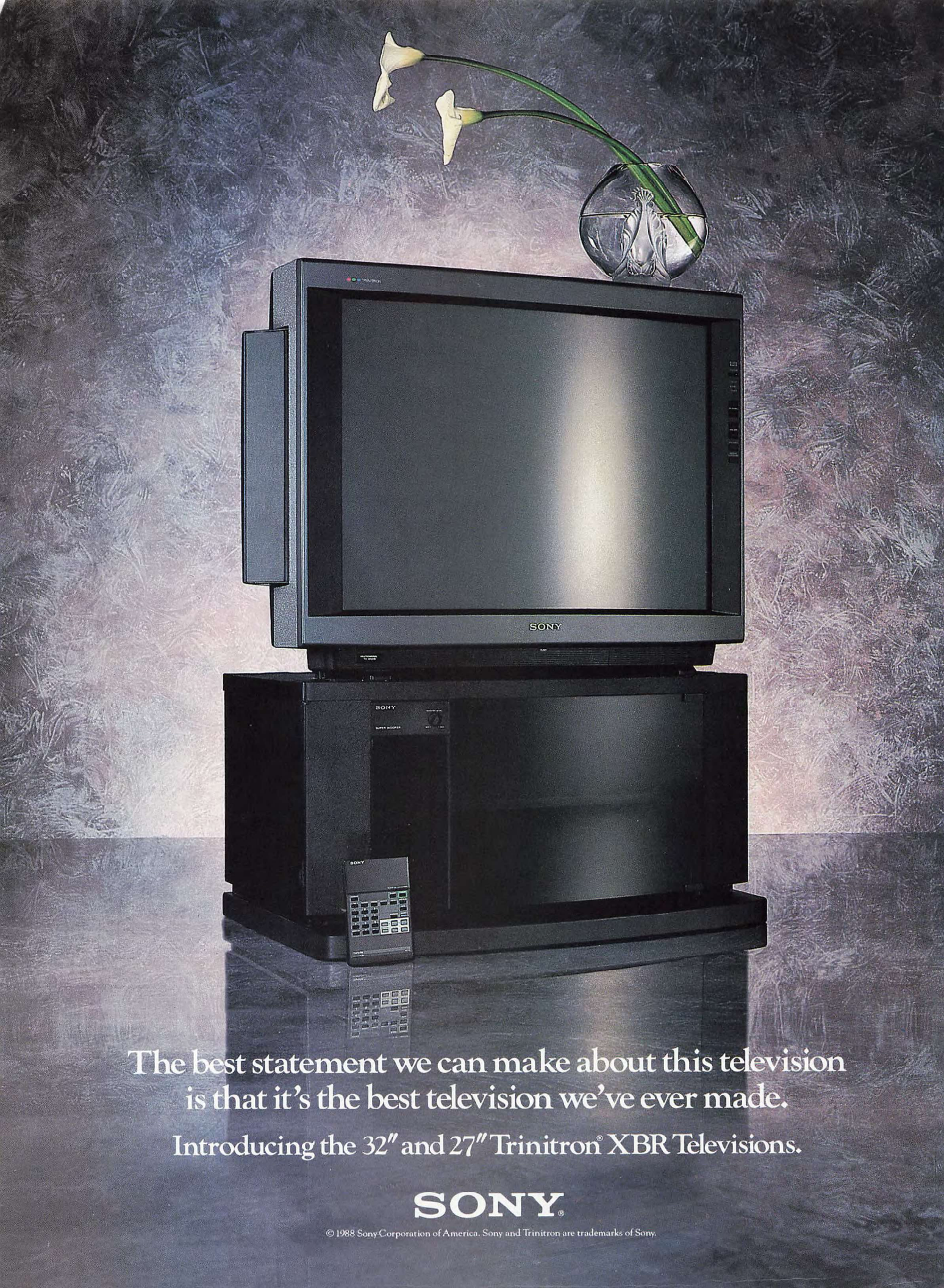

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HotINFO

A Day-of-the-Game Guide

The kickoff of Super Bowl XXIII is scheduled for 5 P.M. (EST).

The NFC champion will be the home team and will have the choice of jersey color. It will use the south bench. The AFC champion will be the visiting team and will use the north bench.

Television coverage of today's game on NBC will begin at 3 P.M. (EST) with the pregame show. The game telecast begins at 5 P.M.

CBS Radio goes on the air with its coverage of Super Bowl XXIII at 4:45 P.M. (EST). After the game, there will be a one-hour wrap-up show. Fans can call in at 1-800-NFL-TALK.

The pregame show salutes the state of Florida, and features live and video appearances by Burt Reynolds, the Miami Sound Machine, Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello, and NASA astronauts representing all phases of America's space program.

Pop star Billy Joel will sing the National Anthem.

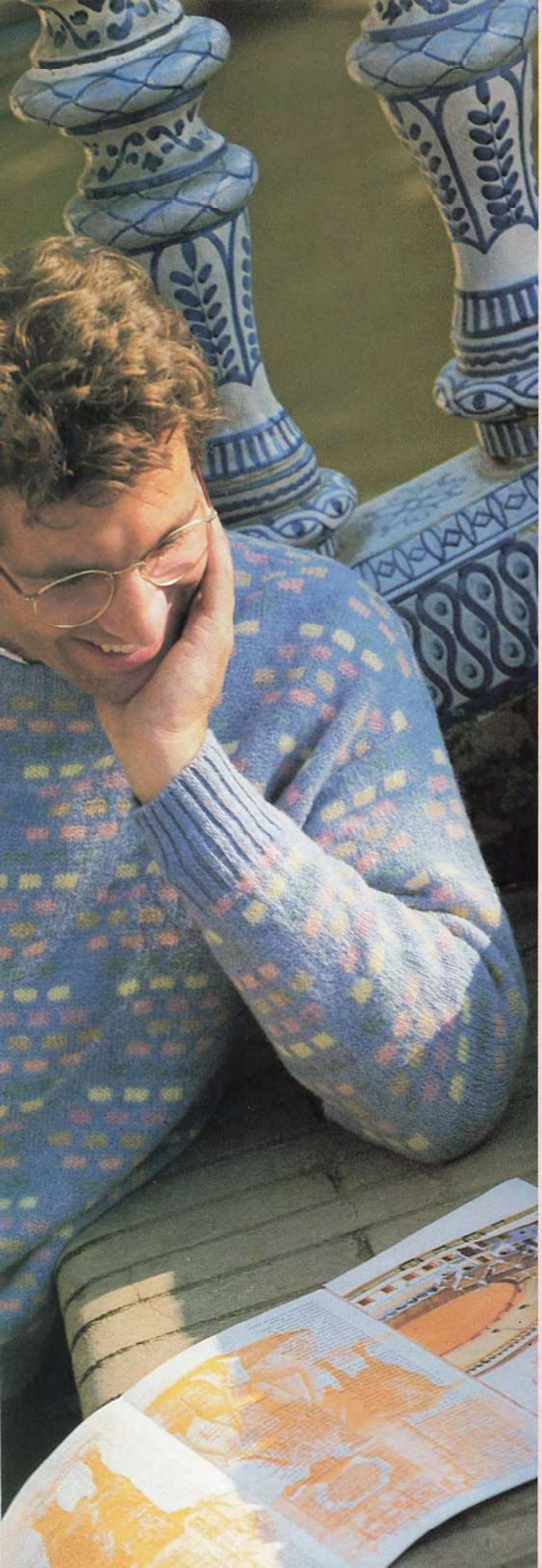
Three representatives of the Miami Dolphins' 1972 team that went 17-0 and won Super Bowl VII—linebacker Nick Buoniconti, quarterback Bob Griese, and guard Larry Little—will participate in today's coin-toss ceremony.

Halftime entertainment, produced by MagicCom and Dan Witkowski, showcases the music of the late 1950s/early 1960s. With more than 1,000 performers, it will be highlighted by the world's largest magic card trick. **Card trick participation instructions are on seat cushions and will be announced over the public address system.**

If the game is tied at the end of the regulation 60 minutes, it will continue in sudden-death overtime. The team scoring first in overtime—by touchdown, field goal, or safety—will win. NFL preseason and regular-season games have a maximum of one 15-minute overtime period. But in postseason games, play continues by 15-minute periods, with two-minute intermissions, until there is a winner.

Each member of the winning team will receive $36,000, and each member of the losing team will receive $18,000—in excess of $2.6 million for the personnel of the competing clubs. ◆

SWEATERS BY LORD JEFF



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Records
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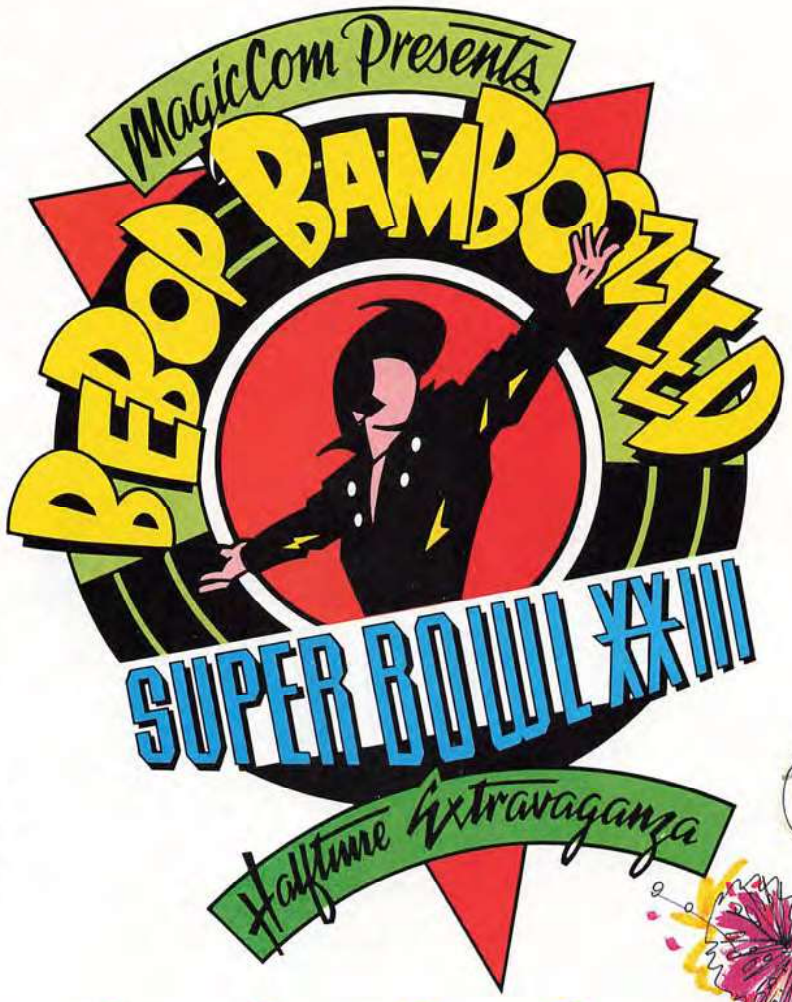
Signals

HALFTIME

BeBop Bamboozled

Magic and music on a grand scale—that's what today's halftime show promises and delivers. Combining the sounds of the late 1950s and early 1960s with high-tech effects of the 1980s, "BeBop Bamboozled" will be the largest magic event in history. In the case of this extravaganza from MagicCom Entertainment, the hand will have to be quicker than millions of eyes around the world; the anticipated viewing audience is 70 million in the U.S. alone, plus viewers in other countries such as England, France, Australia, and China.

Magician/illusionist Dan Witkowski has cast "the prince of prestidigitation," Elvis Presto, as the show's magical musical host. From his stage of 45 RPM records, Presto will transport the audience magically back to the



Costumes by Bill Hargate

era of drive-in movies, juke boxes, poodle skirts, tail-fin cars, and soda fountains.

The halftime magic spectacular replaces the traditional magician's props of top hats and rabbits with razzle-dazzle technical wizardry. Pyrotechnic effects will explode at Presto's command; 400 costumes magically will change color in a swooping domino pattern; 75,000 spectators will participate in the largest magic card trick ever attempted; and roller skaters, flaming props, and a fleet of 100 motorcycles will add to the excitement. The halftime cast of more than 1,000 performers, chosen from South Florida-area dance, theater, and high school talent, will mimic entertainment groups of the era.

The musical score for "Be-Bop Bamboozled," created by Emmy and Tony Award-winning musical director Don Pippin, includes original pieces written for the production as well as familiar tunes from the period, and adaptations of old favorites, including "[Sleight of] Hand Jive," "This Magic Moment," and "Good Lovin'."

BEBOP BAMBOOZLED

Creator/Executive Producer: Dan Witkowski
Producer/Co-Director: Bruce Cook
Associate Producer: Barbara Lutz
Musical Director: Don Pippin
Choreographer: Tad Tadlock
Drill Team Director: Kay Crawford
Artistic Director: Jack Barkla
Costume Designer: Bill Hargate

MagicCom Entertainment gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the estate of Elvis Presley. "Elvis" and "Elvis Presley" are registered trademarks of Elvis Presley, Inc.

23-D

The Super Bowl XXIII halftime show will be a standout in more ways than one. Thanks to sophisticated television technology and a special offer from Diet Coke, the official soft drink of Super Bowl XXIII, today's halftime will be the first ever telecast in 3-D.

At-home viewers have been able to get a free pair of 3-D glasses with a purchase of a six-pack of Diet Coke in the two weeks prior to Super Sunday. With these special glasses, the halftime show can be seen in 3-D. Viewers without the glasses will see the show as a standard television broadcast with no distortion.

"All stereoptic [3-D] systems work on the same principle," says Terry Beard, the inventor of the Nuoptix 3-D process. "They provide your two eyes with two different views of the same scene. What makes the Nuoptix system unique is that it provides a very powerful 3-D image that's easy on the eyes with no color shift."

Beard's 3-D system is based on a number of known visual effects, some discovered as early as the 1920s, relating to the way the brain receives and processes visual information.

"When you look at the glasses," Beard says, "you notice that the left lens has a yellowish tint and the right has a purplish tint. The net effect when the glasses are worn is that visual processing is slightly delayed for the right eye, as if the right eye were seeing the action on the television screen slightly later than the left eye. This, combined with subtle, but almost constant, camera movement, provides the viewer with a continuously evolving perspective. With the glasses on, your eyes see the same scene from a slightly different perspective, hence the 3-D imagery."

To maximize the Nuoptix effect, NBC director John Gonzalez has painstakingly choreographed the halftime broadcast. Every shot, camera angle, and position has been minutely preplanned and sequenced to coordinate with the show's music.

And, according to Beard, not only will the 3-D effect work during the live broadcast, it even will be visible on a videotape of the halftime show—as long as viewers wear the special Diet Coke glasses.

Don't jus

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t sit there.

The Prelude Si

HONDA

DATA

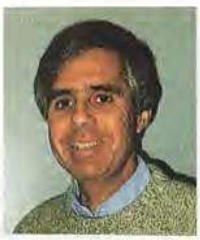
As you peruse the Super Bowl XXIII game program, you will read their prose, admire their artwork, and study their photography. Here is an opportunity to lift the curtain for a momentary personal glimpse. To paraphrase liberally. . .there are a million—well, give or take a few!—stories in this program. Here are six of them.

Craig Dolch

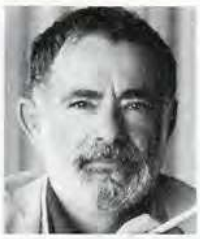
Shelby Strother

Al Messerschmidt

Chris Hopkins



Jim Perry



Marv Rubin

Craig Dolch and **Shelby Strother**, who each contributed a major feature, are no strangers to South Florida. Dolch, who has worked for the *Palm Beach Post/Evening Times* for six years and has covered the Dolphins' beat for three, has lived in the Sunshine State all his life. In 1972, the year the Dolphins attained perfection (Dolch's story begins on page 100), he was a 14-year-old living in Jacksonville.

"I had a '21' jersey at the time," he says. "We'd watch the game and go out and play ball, and I'd be Jim Kiick. I had grandparents who lived in Miami, so I'd stay with them sometimes and go to the Orange Bowl to see the Dolphins play."

Strother now lives in Detroit, where he writes for the *Detroit News*, but he was born in Coral Gables and grew up in the Cape Canaveral area. Unfortunately, Strother was not able to witness the Jets' upset victory over the Colts in Miami 20 years ago (his story begins on page 86). He was a little occupied. More to the point, he was stationed with the Air Force in Southeast Asia.

"My father wrote a letter to me as the game approached," Strother recalls, "saying it was too bad the Colts couldn't play a better team than the Jets. Well, you got six days' worth of mail delivered at once there. By the time it arrived, he already had written a disclaimer letter, which I got at the same time.

"My father was a career military guy. That game almost went against his belief system, with the radical Jets winning. When I finally got home, I was surprised to see how much my father had changed. I won't say the game caused it, but I honestly believe it may have been a factor."

Al Messerschmidt, whose photographs accompany Dolch's story on the 1972 Dolphins, wasn't born in Florida, but he has lived there since 1975. Messerschmidt is the special publications editor for the *Miami Herald*, but he moonlights as one of America's top freelance football photographers. "I live sort of a dual existence," he says.

He had no trouble locating the former champions he was assigned to shoot, but getting each man to sit still for a moment was an uphill struggle. "These guys all are on the road as much as I am," Messerschmidt says. "The funny thing is, Buoniconti and Griese are next-door neighbors. But Griese is always on the road for ABC and Buoniconti works out of Connecticut and only occasionally comes home to Florida. So coordinating their schedules wasn't easy."

The program's cover is the work of artist **Chris Hopkins**, who also created the theme art for Super Bowls XX and XXI.

A graduate of the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, Hopkins spent 12 years in southern California before rediscovering his roots in the Pacific Northwest. "I enjoy fishing and skiing," he explains, "and they're a lot harder to do in L.A. It's a great place but there just aren't enough evergreens around."

Who needs evergreens? Green lights on Wilshire Boulevard are enough to keep **Jim Perry** and **Marv Rubin** happy. The men who pooled their talents to create the 1988 replay (page 113) both are secure in their southern California surroundings.

Perry, an NFL Properties associate editor and former sports information director at USC, once again lived up to the formidable challenge of chronicling an entire NFL season. Having done so, he is filled with respect for the players and coaches he covers.

"After three years of writing the weekly roundup stories," Perry says, "I'm impressed with how fierce the competition is—how hard it is for any team to sustain success. Playing the NFL's sixteen-game schedule is like swimming through a pool of sharks."

If you derive pleasure from the image of a running back literally doing the backstroke through a pool of sharks, have we got an artist for you! Rubin's off-the-wall illustrations have brightened NFL publications for nearly two decades. The son of a Canadian welterweight boxing champion, Rubin himself trained for several years at Los Angeles's Main Street Gym, but finally learned that the brush is mightier than the glove. And safer.

"I enjoy the more particularly outrageous illustration opportunities," he says, "which mostly are the same things people like to see and hear about. There is no formula. When one of my ideas surprises me and I get a kick out of it, I know I'm on the right track." ◆

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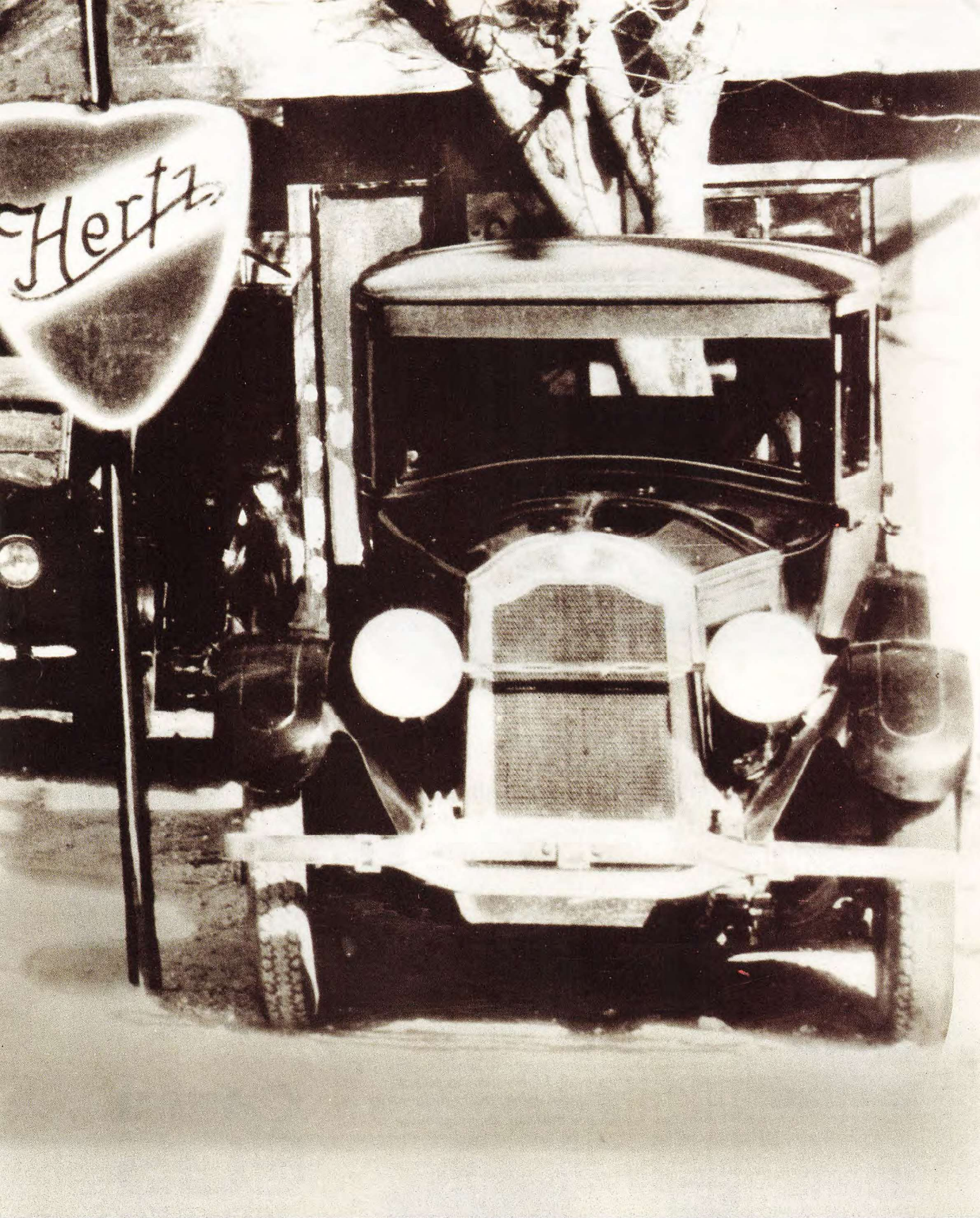

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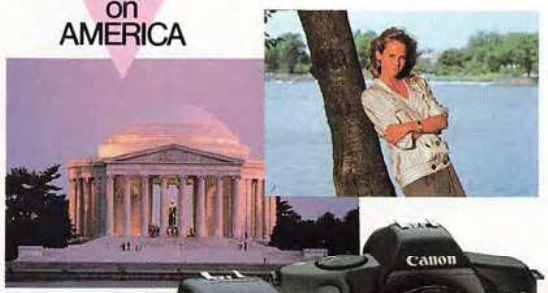

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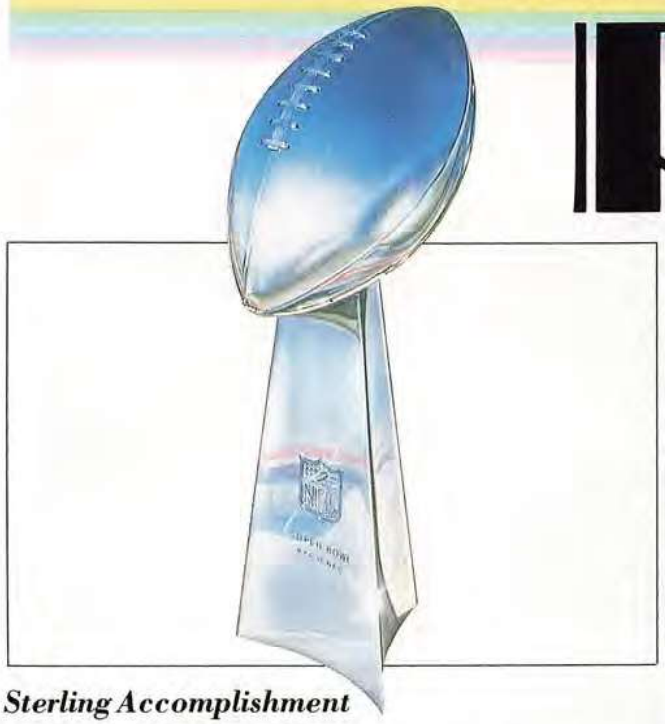

Sterling Accomplishment

It is hard to express the multifarious feelings that accompany a Super Bowl victory. Joy, satisfaction, relief, pride—all of these emotions and more accompany a National Football League world championship, and all are symbolically represented by the Vince Lombardi Trophy, the material token of on-field excellence.

The presentation of a professional football trophy dates back to 1920, the year of the formation of the NFL. But it wasn't until Super Bowl I in 1967 that the trophy took its contemporary form. In 1970, its name was changed to honor one of the league's most respected figures. Vince Lombardi, whose Green Bay Packers won the first two Super Bowls, died of cancer on September 3, 1970, at the age of 57.

Designed by Oscar Riedeneuer of Tiffany & Company, the Vince Lombardi Trophy is cast in sterling silver, weighs approximately 107 ounces, and stands 20¾ inches. The trophy depicts a regulation-size football in the kicking position on a tapering, elongated base of three concave sides. Carved into the front of the prize are the following inscriptions, stacked one over another: VINCE LOMBARDI TROPHY, SUPER BOWL XXIII, and AFC VS. NFC. The official NFL shield appears between two inscriptions.

After the game, the NFL Commissioner presents the winning team with permanent possession of the trophy. It then is returned to Tiffany for engraving of team names and score.

Diamond Vision

The team that wins the Super Bowl receives the Vince Lombardi Trophy as an award of excellence. But, lest we forget, the winning team also is made up of individuals. And each of those individuals—from linebackers to trainers to front-office management—gets a Super Bowl ring to mark the victory. The NFL pays for 90 rings; any rings ordered above that are purchased by the club.

ED IKUTA

Washington's 1988 ring (above); see page 22 for previous 21 rings.

The NFL has strict guidelines—including type of gold, diamond valuation, and price—that must be followed when the rings are designed. One shank of the ring is designated for the depiction of the game itself and incorporates the game logo, location, date, and participants. The other shank can be personalized to a greater extent.

Josten's has designed and manufactured the ring for 14 Super Bowl victors; L.G. Balfour has done so for four teams; and Lenox Awards has been selected by three champions. The Washington Redskins contracted Tiffany & Company to produce their Super Bowl XXII rings. Tiffany had designed many prestigious sports prizes, including the Lombardi Trophy, the Belmont Stakes Trophy, and the 1980 Olympics medals, but this was its first Super Bowl ring.

Tiffany's finished product is a 30 pennyweight ring with a total diamond weight of 140 points. The face of the Redskins' ring is centered with a diamond football, flanked by two diamond Super Bowl trophies symbolizing Washington's two Super Bowl victories in the 1980s under head coach Joe Gibbs. It is the first Super Bowl ring made entirely of precious gemstones, to the exclusion of synthetic ones.

The ring's two shanks are carved in bas-relief, similar to a coin. One side of the ring features the recipient's name (and number if applicable) and the Redskins' helmet. The opposite side displays the official Super Bowl XXII logo under the banner, "Hail to the Redskins." Three famous Washington, D.C., structures—the Washington Monument, the Capitol Building, and the Lincoln Memorial—also appear with the logo. Each ring is enclosed in a natural pigskin case, with Tiffany & Company gold stamped on the exterior and the Redskins logo inside.

Gibbs presented a ring to each member of the organization at the team's headquarters last August 5.

The losing Super Bowl team also receives 90 pieces of selected jewelry, such as watches or rings, costing no more than half the price set for the winning team's rings.

Championship Rings

Giants—Super Bowl XXI

Steelers—Super Bowl XIV

Dolphins—Super Bowl VII

Bears—Super Bowl XX

Steelers—Super Bowl XIII

Cowboys—Super Bowl VI

49ers—Super Bowl XIX

Cowboys—Super Bowl XII

Colts—Super Bowl V

Raiders—Super Bowl XVIII

Raiders—Super Bowl XI

Chiefs—Super Bowl IV

Redskins—Super Bowl XVII

Steelers—Super Bowl X

Jets—Super Bowl III

49ers—Super Bowl XVI

Steelers—Super Bowl IX

Packers—Super Bowl II

Raiders—Super Bowl XV

Dolphins—Super Bowl VIII

Packers—Super Bowl I

ED KUTA

JIM CORNFIELD

Winners Already

Before today's teams even step onto the field at Joe Robbie Stadium, they will be the owners of two coveted trophies. The AFC champion receives the Lamar Hunt Trophy, named for the owner of the Kansas City Chiefs and one of the founders of the American Football League (1960-69); the NFC champion receives the George Halas Trophy, namesake of one of the NFL's original founders and a player, coach, and owner of the Chicago Bears for 63 years.

Based on an original design by Don Weller, each is football shaped, with a raised silver frieze depicting game action and a three-dimensional emblem of the appropriate conference set on a chrome and rosewood base.

Celebrity Ball

The balls used in today's game look familiar enough. But closer inspection will divulge that today's pigskins are special commemorative models of the regulation NFL balls made by Wilson Sporting Goods Company.

What's the difference? The Super Bowl XXIII logo is on one side, the names of the competing teams and today's date and site are on the other. If you're looking to have a ball yourself, a limited number are available at retail stores in the Miami area. ◆

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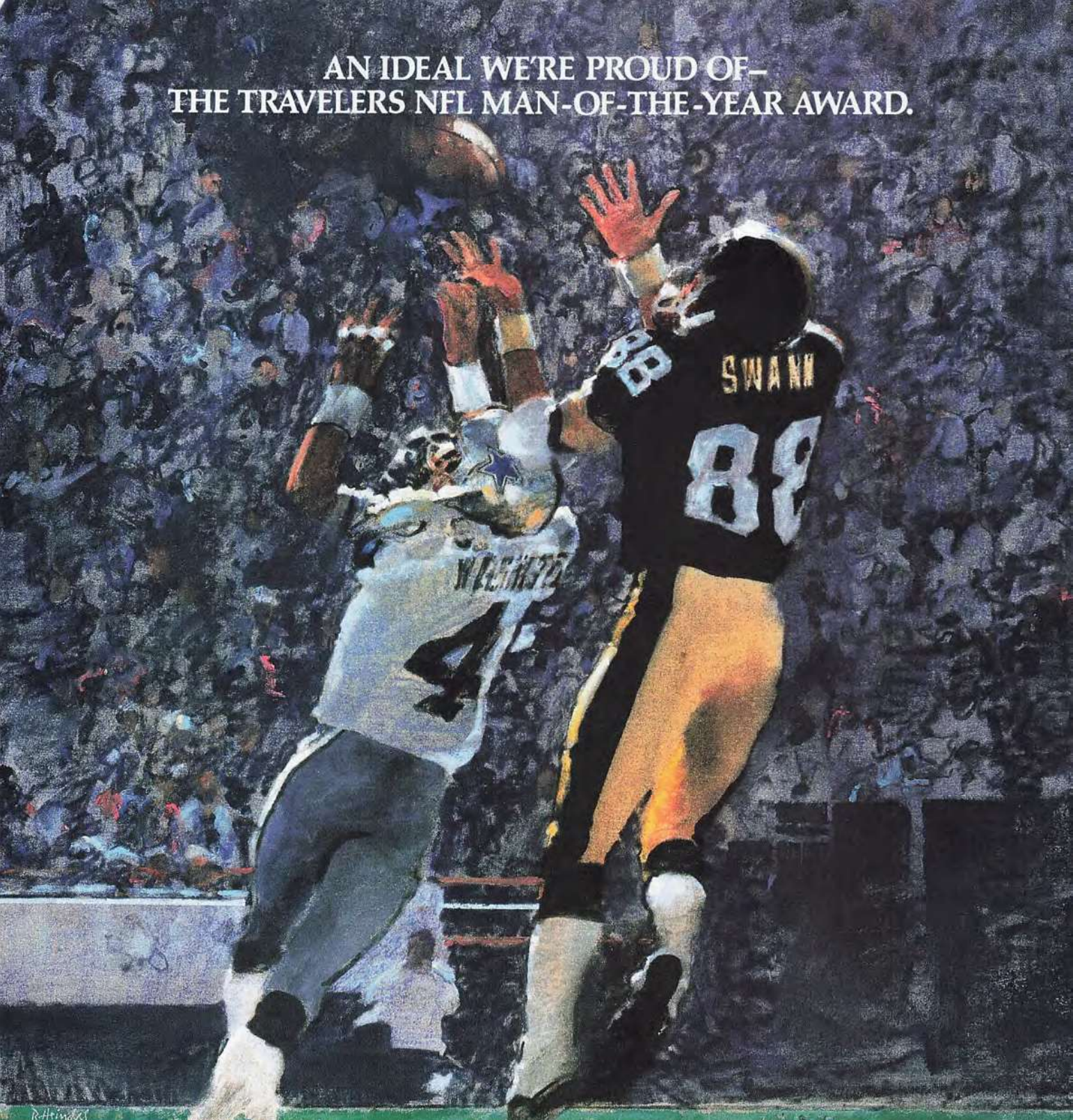

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MEDIA

NBC You There

The announcing team of Dick Enberg and Merlin Olsen, which has been together longer than any television tandem currently covering the NFL, will be the men behind the microphones on NBC's Super Bowl XXIII broadcast. This will be Enberg's fourth Super Bowl telecast, and Olsen's fifth.

The game broadcast begins at 3 P.M. (EST) with a two-hour pregame show, featuring NBC's starting lineup of Bob Costas, Ahmad Rashad, Paul Maguire, Gayle Gardner, and Frank Deford. As an added attraction, executive producer Michael Weisman has put together the "NFL Talent Challenge"—a contest showcasing NFL players with off-the-field show business talent, performing live routines before a panel of entertainment industry judges. The winner will be announced at halftime.

Producer Larry Cirillo and director Ted Nathanson (who also is the coordinating producer for NBC's regular-season NFL coverage) will head the production effort that includes 150 people and a total of 23 cameras. There will be 18 stationary cameras posted throughout Joe Robbie Stadium, plus three hand-held and two unmanned cameras.

GEORGE ROSE

Super Bowl veterans Dick Enberg (left) and Merlin Olsen.

CBS RADIO

Play-by-play man Jack Buck (left) and analyst Hank Stram.

Airwave Aces

Jack Buck and Hank Stram will be in the booth once again for CBS Radio's broadcast of Super Bowl XXIII, beginning at 4:45 P.M. (EST). The outstanding announcing duo will be joined for the pregame and halftime by Brent Musberger. Buck and Stram also will host "NFL Talk," a one-hour postgame talk show, broadcast live from Joe Robbie Stadium. Fans can call in their questions and comments on the game by dialing 1-800-NFL-TALK.

Musberger, along with Will McDonough, hosted a Super Bowl XXIII preview on Friday, the culmination of CBS Radio's "Road to the Super Bowl," a series of two-minute reports on the NFL postseason, which began December 26.

XXI for XXIII

Imagine a team making it to the Super Bowl for 23 consecutive years. Well, that's what a remarkable team of national media representatives has done. The membership list for the exclusive Super Bowl XXIII club includes 13 writers and 8 photographers. The writers are Dick Connor, Art Daley, Mel Durslag, Larry Felser, Jerry Green, Jerry Izenberg, Dave Klein, Will McDonough, Norm Miller, Bob Oates, Ed Pope, Cooper Rollow, and John Steadman. The photographers are John Biever, Vernon Biever, David Boss, Malcolm Emmons, Walter Iooss, Jr., Mickey Palmer, Dick Raphael, and Tony Tomsic.

Beam Me Up, Coach

Thanks to the new NFL Satellite News Service, the postgame comments of players from the winning and losing teams will be available to television stations around the world to help supplement their coverage of Super Bowl XXIII.

The NFL also has been providing daily transmissions from Miami this past week on Super Bowl-related stories. ♦

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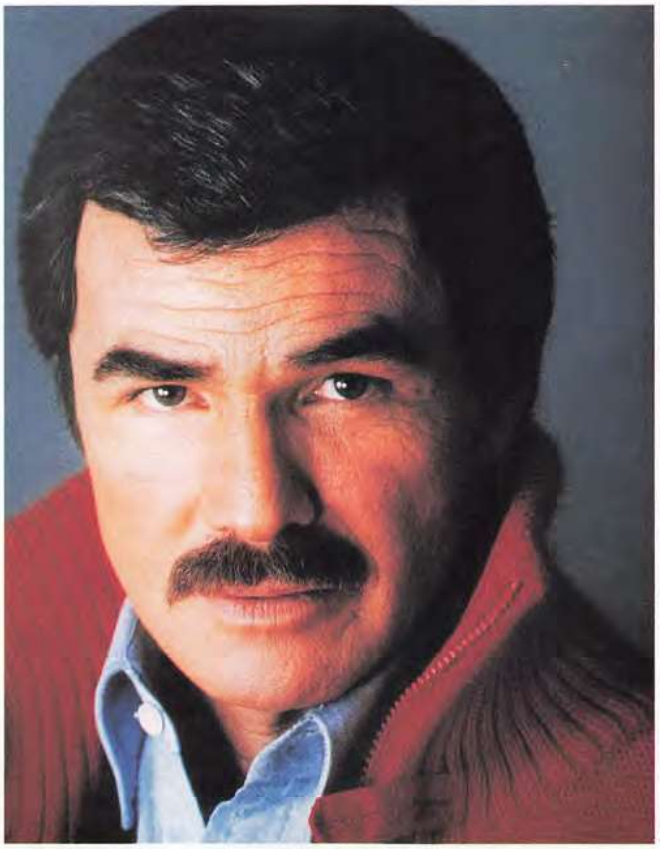
SIDELIGHTS

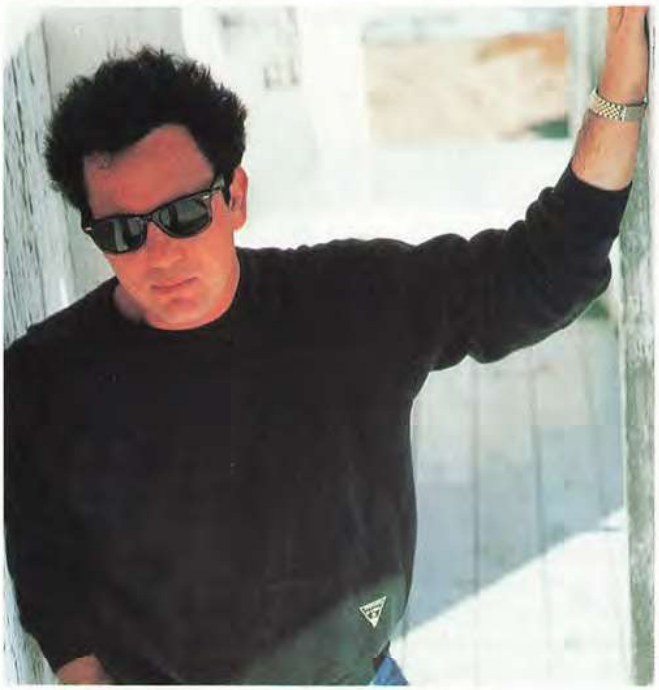
Tough Act to Follow

Today's pregame show, entitled "Welcome to Florida," highlights aspects of the state's great natural and cultural diversity. The show, which is hosted by Florida native Burt Reynolds, who appears by way of the Jumbotron stadium video screen, opens with a celebration of Florida's natural resources, from the Everglades to the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. The segment's cast of 350 performers, choreographed by Lesslee Fitzmorris, is headed by beach party king and queen Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello.

A salute to the contributions and influences of Latin culture comes next in the show, which is staged by executive producer Bob Best and associate producer Ed Jones. It features festive costumes and is headlined by the Miami Sound Machine performing their hit song "Conga" on video.



Motion picture star and video host Burt Reynolds



Recording artist Billy Joel gets the ball rolling.

The finale pays tribute to NASA and the Kennedy Space Center at Cape Canaveral. Eight astronauts representing the four main phases of America's space program —Mercury, Gemini, Apollo, and the Space Shuttle—will appear in person, along with space vehicles and hardware, including a lunar rover, supplied by the Space and Rocket Center of Huntsville, Alabama.

Superstar Billy Joel will sing the National Anthem, in conjunction with an appearance by the U.S. Army's 3rd Infantry Old Guard period color team—40 members in historical American military uniforms.

Not the Only Game in Town

Miami-area fans have been able to keep their Super Bowl appetites whetted with two other special football games played locally. The first game featured the Heat, a team of "pigs" from the Broward County Sheriff's office (not to be confused with the Washington Redskins' Hogs), playing a team of South Florida attorneys (the Legal Eagles) in the fourth annual Super Broward Pig Bowl. Played in Ft. Lauderdale's Lockhart Stadium, the full-contact charity game raised money for the Miami Project to Cure Paralysis, and local victims of crime.

Another charity game also combined "pigs" and pigskins. A team from the Los Angeles Police Department flew cross-country to take on a home team from the Miami Metro/Dade County Police Departments in the Orange Bowl. The beneficiary of that contest was Partners for Youth.

The Broward Heat will be making a post-Super Bowl appearance on February 18, when they accept a challenge from the Palm Beach Police Department.

"We have raised many thousands of dollars for charity with these games," says Elaine Miceli of the Broward County Sheriff's Office.

Hambo, the red-shirted 1988 Broward Pig Bowl mascot.

SIDELIGHTS

Tossing Trio

DICK RAPHAEL

Nick Buoniconti

FRED KAPLAN

Bob Griese

MALCOLM EMMONS

Larry Little

Former quarterback Bob Griese, guard Larry Little, and linebacker Nick Buoniconti, who played for Miami's 1972 undefeated (17-0) team and represented the Dolphins at the coin toss prior to Super Bowl VII, return to this year's game in a similar—but ceremonial—capacity. As part of the pregame, they will participate in the tossing of the coin prior to kickoff. The toss will be called by the captain of the visiting team. The winner of the toss chooses either to kick or receive, or which goal to defend.

A Time for Heroes

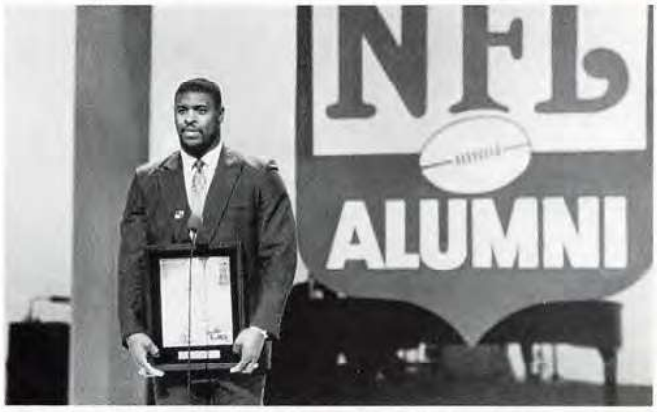
Heroes on and off the playing field were honored at Saturday night's NFL Alumni Player of the Year dinner. Among the many memorable moments was a tribute to the late Arthur J. Rooney, Sr., the Pittsburgh Steelers' founder and owner who died last August at age 87.

Now in its seventh year, the Super Bowl eve affair centers around the presentation of the NFL Player of the Year awards to 11 current NFL stars at 11 different positions. Winners are determined by a vote of NFL Alumni members who once played the same positions.

Also in the spotlight Saturday night was retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Charles E. (Chuck) Yeager. He was presented with the NFL Alumni Old Hero award, which recognizes outstanding public figures whose careers have made them role models for youth.

In addition, the Alumni organization presented its first Inspirational Hero award to remarkable singer-guitarist Tony Melendez, who has pursued a career in music despite being born without arms.

Proceeds from the dinner will go toward NFL Alumni youth programs and Hope for a Drug-Free America, the national anti-drug movement led by Bob Hope.



Eagles defensive end Reggie White, a 1987 recipient

Super Bowl Datebook

Super Bowl XXIV will be played January 28, 1990, at the Louisiana Superdome.

The silver anniversary game, Super Bowl XXV, is slated for January 27, 1991, at Tampa Stadium.

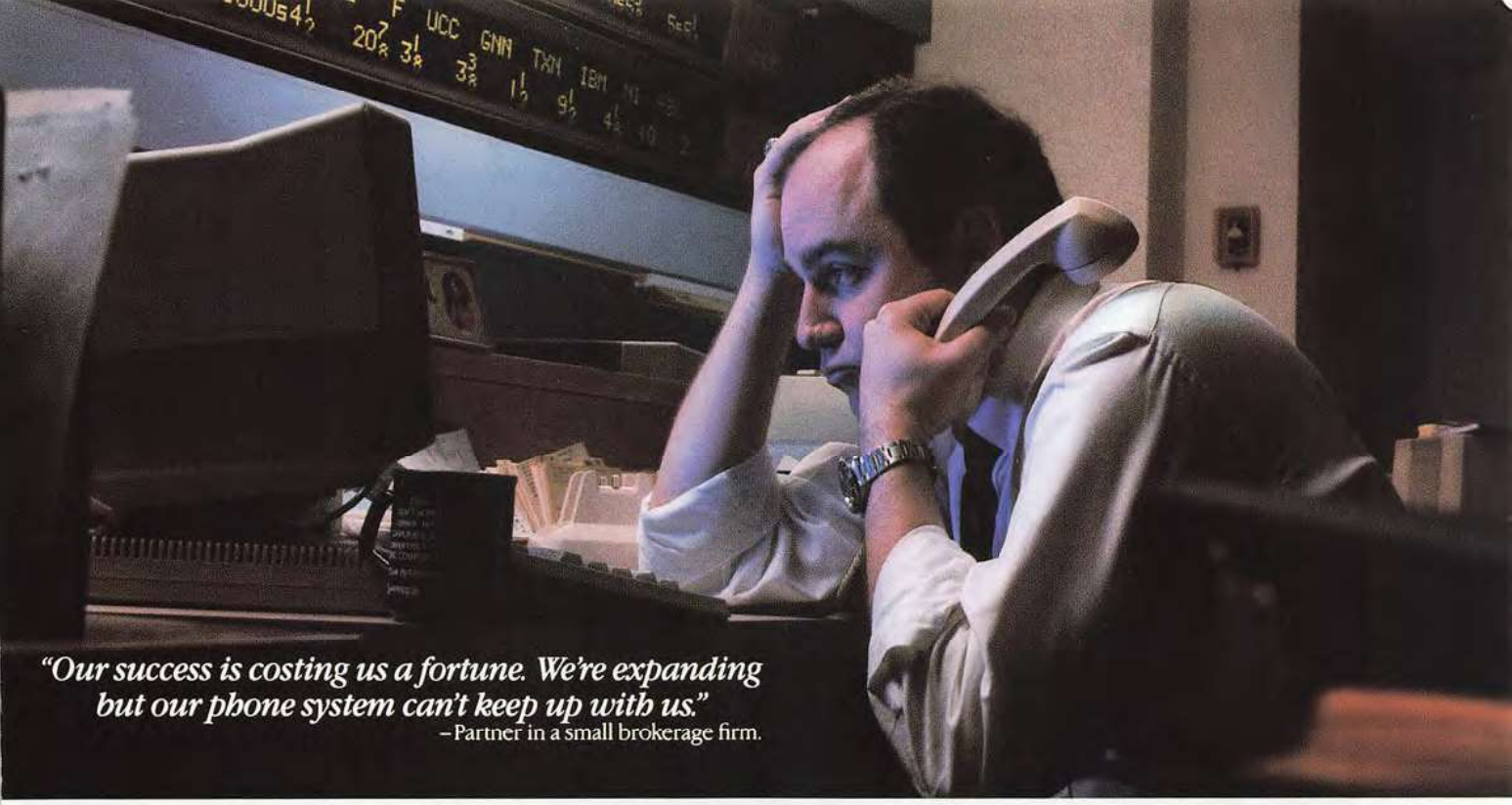
Teeing Off for Charity

BILL MARK

From left: Dick Anderson, Joe DiMaggio, and Dave Anderson

For the fifth Super Bowl in a row, sports celebrities—including tournament host Joe DiMaggio—and journalists teed off with amateur golfers in the Buick Super Bowl Golf Classic. Proceeds from the tournament benefit the NFL's Dire Need Fund, which provides financial assistance to players from the league's early years. More than 250 golfers participated in this year's event, which was so large it required two courses at the prestigious Doral Country Club in Miami.

Last year's tournament, played at Torrey Pines Golf Course in La Jolla, California, raised $75,000, according to tournament coordinator Nick Nicolosi. It was won by sportswriter Dave Anderson of the *New York Times*, who originally helped found the event, and Dick Anderson, a former defensive back for the Miami Dolphins who currently is president of the Miami Super Bowl Task Force. ◆



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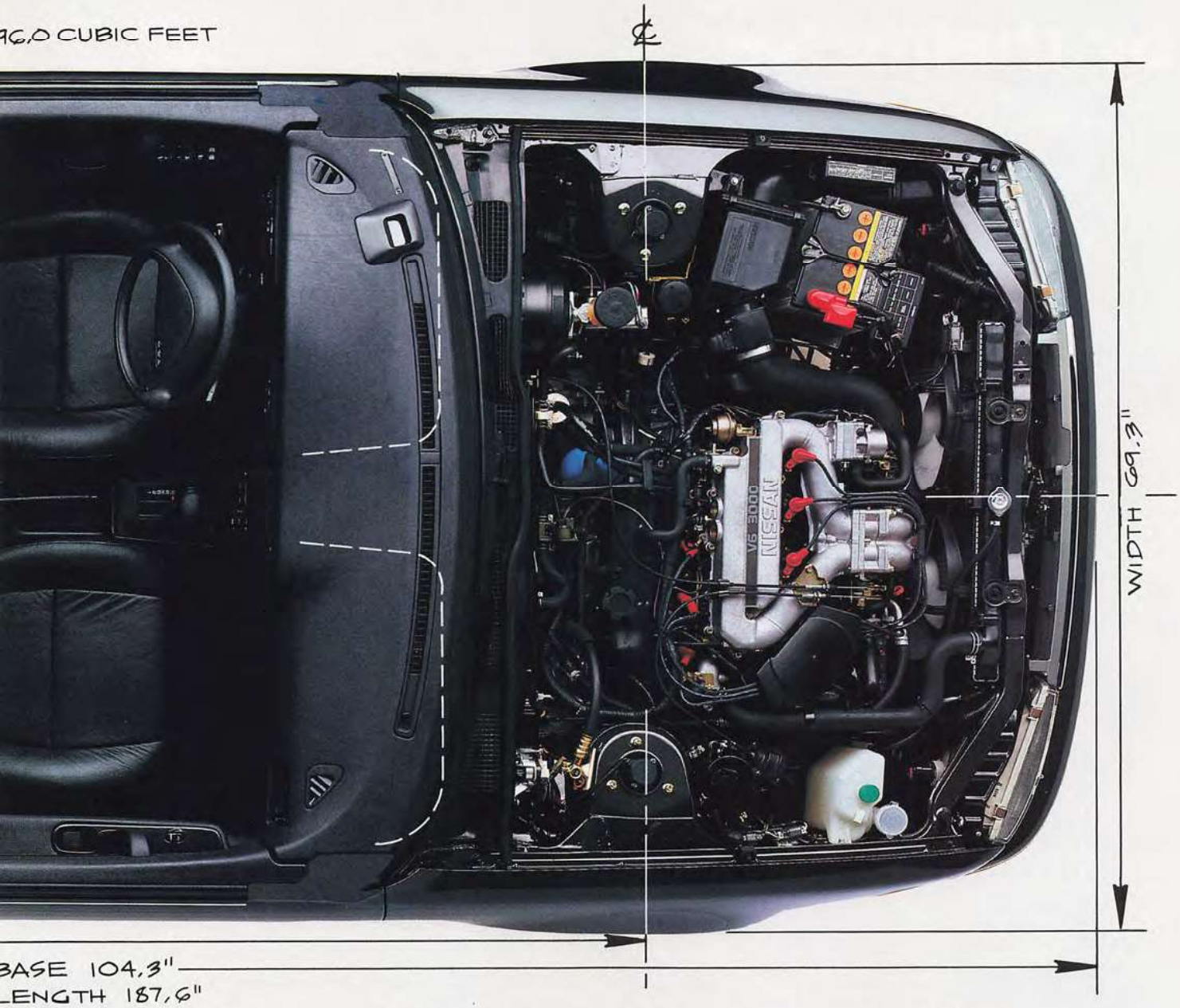

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Dan Marino

Dan Marino, Pro Quarterback

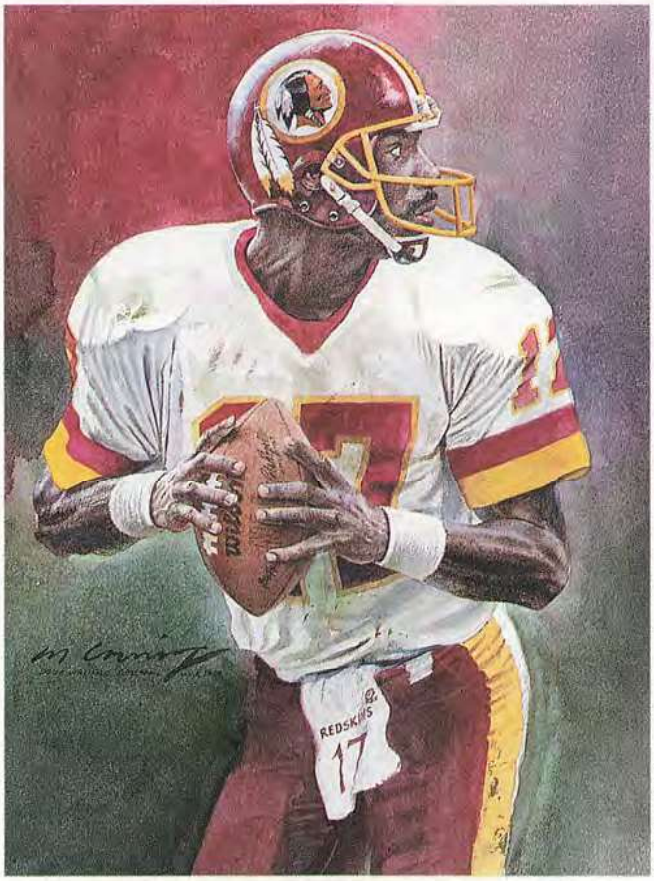
AWARDS

The MVPs: Doug Williams

It looked as if Doug Williams's day might be over when the Redskins' quarterback fell while dropping back to pass and hyperflexed his left knee late in the first quarter of Super Bowl XXII. But Williams made one of the fastest and mightiest comebacks in Super Bowl history.

With his team trailing the Denver Broncos 10-0, Williams re-entered the game with 14:17 left in the second quarter. He and his Washington teammates then proceeded to stun the Broncos, the in-stadium crowd, and an international television audience with an awesome display of offensive pyrotechnics. Williams directed scoring drives of 80, 64, 74, 60, and 79 yards on five consecutive possessions to obliterate Denver's early lead and replace it with an insurmountable 35-10 Washington advantage at halftime.

In a total of 18 plays and 5:47 on the stadium clock, Williams completed 9 of 11 passes for 228 yards and touchdowns of 80, 27, 50, and 8 yards. A sideline pass to Ricky Sanders for 80 yards tied the record for the longest pass completion and scrimmage play in Super Bowl history. And this all happened in the second quarter.



MERV CORNING

By game's end, Williams had directed yet another scoring drive, capped by Timmy Smith's four-yard run, and finished with a Super Bowl-record 340 yards passing and the most valuable player award. Williams may have been going to Disneyland as he stated for the commercial cameras after the game, but for one incredible quarter, he was playing in a Super Bowl Fantasyland.

Super Bowl Results/MVPs

I Green Bay 35, Kansas City 10
MVP: *Bart Starr, QB, Packers*
II Green Bay 33, Oakland 14
MVP: *Bart Starr, QB, Packers*
III New York Jets 16, Baltimore 7
MVP: *Joe Namath, QB, Jets*
IV Kansas City 23, Minnesota 7
MVP: *Len Dawson, QB, Chiefs*
V Baltimore 16, Dallas 13
MVP: *Chuck Howley, LB, Cowboys*
VI Dallas 24, Miami 3
MVP: *Roger Staubach, QB, Cowboys*
VII Miami 14, Washington 7
MVP: *Jake Scott, S, Dolphins*
VIII Miami 24, Minnesota 7
MVP: *Larry Csonka, RB, Dolphins*
IX Pittsburgh 16, Minnesota 6
MVP: *Franco Harris, RB, Steelers*
X Pittsburgh 21, Dallas 17
MVP: *Lynn Swann, WR, Steelers*
XI Oakland 32, Minnesota 14
MVP: *Fred Biletnikoff, WR, Raiders*
XII Dallas 27, Denver 10
MVPs: *Harvey Martin, DE, and Randy White, DT, Cowboys*
XIII Pittsburgh 35, Dallas 31
MVP: *Terry Bradshaw, QB, Steelers*
XIV Pittsburgh 31, Los Angeles Rams 19
MVP: *Terry Bradshaw, QB, Steelers*
XV Oakland 27, Philadelphia 10
MVP: *Jim Plunkett, QB, Raiders*
XVI San Francisco 26, Cincinnati 21
MVP: *Joe Montana, QB, 49ers*
XVII Washington 27, Miami 17
MVP: *John Riggins, RB, Redskins*
XVIII Los Angeles Raiders 38, Washington 9
MVP: *Marcus Allen, RB, Raiders*
XIX San Francisco 38, Miami 16
MVP: *Joe Montana, QB, 49ers*
XX Chicago 46, New England 10
MVP: *Richard Dent, DE, Bears*
XXI New York Giants 39, Denver 20
MVP: *Phil Simms, QB, Giants*
XXII Washington 42, Denver 10
MVP: *Doug Williams, QB, Redskins*

The Superstars

The stars from the Super Bowl teams are not the only players to be feted this week. Four corporate-sponsored NFL award programs will be announcing their winners as well.

The Travelers NFL Man of the Year award honors the player who has most distinguished himself with his play on the field and his dedication to community-service activities off the field. A $25,000 charity fund is established in the name of the Man of the Year winner; $1,000 funds are set up in the names of the 28 team nominees. The 1988 winner was Chicago Bears safety Dave Duerson.

The *Lite/NFL Lineman of the Year* award honors the two outstanding linemen of the season, one offensive and one defensive. Donations of $25,000 are made by the Miller Brewing Company to the charities specified by each of the winners. A year ago the winners were Minnesota Vikings tackle Gary Zimmerman and Buffalo Bills defensive end Bruce Smith.

The *Old Spice NFL Rookie of the Year* program selects the season's top new player from a group of four finalists. The 1988 winner, like Buffalo Bills linebacker Shane Conlan last year, becomes the co-donor of a $25,000 charity fund. Each of the three other finalists has $3,000 donated to charity in his name.

The *Gillette NFL People's Choice* award spotlights the league's most valuable player, as chosen by fan balloting. The fans selected Cleveland quarterback Bernie Kosar as the MVP last year. ◆

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TRIVIA

Redskins Remembered

The late Edward Bennett Williams holds a distinction no one is likely to match for a while, if ever. Williams was the only person ever to own the winning Super Bowl and World Series teams in the same year, the Washington Redskins and the Baltimore Orioles in 1983. . . . In both of its Super Bowl victories, Washington's opponent has scored first—on a long pass. Miami's David Woodley threw a 76-yard touchdown pass to Jimmy Cefalo in Super Bowl XVII. Last year, John Elway threw a 56-yard bomb to Ricky Nattiel on Denver's first play. . . . Sam Wyche, now the Cincinnati Bengals' head coach, was quarterback Billy Kilmer's backup when the Redskins made it to Super Bowl VII. Wyche, a journeyman in the NFL from 1968-1976, had been Washington's number-three quarterback until number-two man Sonny Jurgensen injured his foot during the regular season.

The Subject Is QBs

AL MESSERSCHMIDT

49ers' Joe Montana

Six quarterbacks have played on winning and losing Super Bowl teams: Kansas City's Len Dawson, Baltimore's Earl Morrall and Johnny Unitas, Miami's Bob Griese, Dallas's Roger Staubach, and Washington's Joe Theismann. . . . In 10 of the first 14 Super Bowls played, the winning quarterback wore jersey number 12. Since then, none has. . . . Only two quarterbacks have led their college teams to national championships and their NFL teams to Super Bowl victories, Joe Namath (Alabama, 1965, and New York Jets, Super Bowl III) and Joe Montana (Notre Dame, 1977, and San Francisco, Super Bowls XVI and XIX). . . . Another Namath-Montana oddity: Both hold the title of youngest Super Bowl-winning quarterback. When they won, their ages were the same—almost to the day. . . . Super Bowl XII was unique in that the opposing quarterbacks, Denver's Craig Morton and Dallas's Roger Staubach, both had played on the same Dallas teams that appeared in Super Bowls V (Morton started) and VI (Staubach started).

Trivia Notables

Tom Brown, a starting safety for the Green Bay Packers in Games I and II, is the only Super Bowl participant ever to have played major league baseball. Brown played the outfield and first base for the Washington Senators in 1963. . . . In Super Bowl X, Dallas wide receiver Percy Howard enjoyed what has to be called a "career moment" when he caught a 34-yard touchdown pass from Roger Staubach. It was Howard's only NFL reception. . . . The AFC East is the division that has gone the longest since producing a Super Bowl champion—14 years, dating back to Miami's second consecutive title in Super Bowl VIII.

Say That Again?

Washington Redskins center **Jeff Bostic**, remembering one of head coach Joe Gibbs's policies while the team practiced in Florida for Super Bowl XVIII: "He told us to spend the nights as we would if we were home. Unfortunately, too many guys did just that."

♦

NFL Films president **Steve Sabol**, on the difference between Super Bowls I and XXII: "There were no blimps at the first Super Bowl, but Super Bowl XXII attracted three of them. It will live forever as a day of blimphamy."

♦

Former Pittsburgh Steelers wide receiver **Lynn Swann**, the most valuable player in Super Bowl X, recalling his postgame adventure: "I talked so much to the media I missed the team bus to the hotel, then I missed the bus to the victory party. So I talked a guy into taking the car I won off the [display] stand. I filled it with gas and drove to the party."

Quality Time

It figured that David Shula, son of Miami Dolphins head coach Don Shula, would come up with something dramatic when asked to name his most vivid Super Bowl memory.

When David, currently one of his dad's assistant coaches, put his mind to it, his all-time choice was an episode from Super Bowl VII, when the team finished its record-breaking 17-0 season with a 14-7 victory over the Washington Redskins in Los Angeles.

"They were carrying my father off the field at the Los Angeles Coliseum," he said. "Somebody reached up and stole his watch. My father climbed off the shoulders and caught him and got the watch back."

Maybe it was Don's experience as a defensive back with Cleveland, Baltimore, and Washington in the 1950s that helped him track down the thief.

"It was a good watch," David said. ♦

BOB ROSATO

Shula (left) and son at work on a Sunday afternoon.

INSIGHT

By Bill McGrane

HE FINISHED THE FRIday press conference, which was the last obligatory appearance, and waded through the media types clogging the aisle. He wore a rich brown suit and a fixed smile and kept moving.

"Predictions, coach. . . how about a score?"

The grin stayed fixed.

"I sure hope so."

"Hope what?"

"Hope we score!"

A national writer draped his arm across the coach's shoulders in a gesture of familiarity. The coach resented that. The writer breathed garlic against his ear.

"I need a couple minutes alone with you," the writer said. "How about sometime this afternoon?"

The coach kept walking until he was clear of the throng, so that it was just he and the clinging writer and the club's PR guy.

He shrugged the arm off his shoulder and began ticking off a count on his fingers.

"We talked Tuesday at photo day, we talked Wednesday. . .twice. . .and you called me last night in my room."

"Yeah, but. . ."

The smile was still there and with a whiff of tolerance, but just a whiff.

"You know how many guys I got wanting just a couple minutes alone?" he asked.

The writer squared his shoulders and hitched up his gut.

"If I was just one of them I wouldn't be asking," he snapped. "But I'm not."

The coach eventually nodded, and the smile reached his eyes.

"I kind of like that," he

DON WELLER

said. "You can be a real pain. . .but I kind of like that. Call me at four, in the room. Don't come to the room, call me. We'll talk." He placed a lethal-looking forefinger between the writer's eyes.

"Briefly."

He turned to the PR guy and said, "Let's haul ass."

He fell asleep in the car going back to the team hotel.

The suite was empty. He walked to the bedroom. He saw his wife's note just as the private phone rang. He had an unlisted phone installed for the week. He didn't answer the house phone.

"Yep?"

"I'm down by the pool," his wife responded.

"I know, I saw your note."

"Your cousin's down here . . .and your sister and her husband."

He grunted.

"Keep 'em away, will you?" he said. "I need to do my list."

"I figured that," she said. "I've got them going to the races with Jay and his wife."

" 'Atta girl. What's tonight, anything?"

"Just the Commissioner's party, that's all."

"I forgot, okay?" He wished he hadn't snapped. He was tired. . .from not enough sleep, from all the fuss and focus, just tired.

". . .taking myself too seriously."

"What?" she asked.

"Nothing. I know we should go to the party. That's good, we'll go and we'll even have a good time."

"But we'll leave early," she said.

He laughed. "Sure, but we'll have a good time while we're there."

"Okay. . .well, I'll be up later."

"Hey!" he said.

"What?"

"You're a neat lady."

He sat on the cool, deep leather sofa in the parlor. He wore a loose, faded golf shirt and wrinkled, faded shorts —his cherished outfit.

He wrote on cardboard about eighteen inches square. The cardboard had been divided into boxes, with each box representing a down-and-distance variable . . .second-and-long, second-and-short, plus territory, minus territory, and so forth.

The computer gave them the same information. Actually, the computer probably was better at it, because the computer didn't care. . .but he still wrote down his preferred plays for all of the situations, given the defense they would face on Sunday. The offensive coordinator and the offensive assistants had their ready list, too. Technically speaking, that was the game plan. But he still made his list.

In college, his head coach had said it didn't matter how well you thought you knew a thing, you knew it better if you wrote it down.

They weren't close then. Indeed, he laughed off the advice of his college coach.

"Don't worry about me getting into coaching," he would say. "I don't want my paycheck depending on some goof like me."

Well, he'd been in coaching for 17 years, and he made notes. He made his lists beforehand and afterwards. While it still was fresh, he'd go through a game's play-by-play report and write in a journal circumstances surrounding every call and result.

Sitting there, making those notations in the total silence of the suite, he truly forgot about the week and its bigness and all that was yet to come. He didn't have to be anybody else, just a coach, doing what he loved. The black pen was for plays he knew were good but didn't spin his cap around, the green pen for "go" plays, the ones for which he had a good feeling.

The unlisted phone rang at exactly 4 P.M. He set the cardboard aside and went back, reluctantly, to being somebody else.

But briefly. ◆

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SUPER BOWL RECORDS

INDIVIDUAL RECORDS

Service

Most Games
5 Marv Fleming, Green Bay, 1967-68; Miami, 1972-74
Larry Cole, Dallas, 1971-72, 1976, 1978-79
Cliff Harris, Dallas, 1971-72, 1976, 1978-79
D. D. Lewis, Dallas, 1971-72, 1976, 1978-79
Preston Pearson, Baltimore, 1969; Pittsburgh, 1975; Dallas, 1976, 1978-79
Charlie Waters, Dallas, 1971-72, 1976, 1978-79
Rayfield Wright, Dallas, 1971-72, 1976, 1978-79

Most Games, Winning Team
4 By many players

Most Games, Coach
6 Don Shula, Baltimore, 1969; Miami, 1972-74, 1983, 1985
5 Tom Landry, Dallas, 1971-72, 1976, 1978-79
4 Bud Grant, Minnesota, 1970, 1974-75, 1977
Chuck Noll, Pittsburgh, 1975-76, 1979-80

Most Games, Winning Team, Coach
4 Chuck Noll, Pittsburgh, 1975-76, 1979-80
2 Vince Lombardi, Green Bay, 1967-68
Tom Landry, Dallas, 1972, 1978
Don Shula, Miami, 1973-74
Tom Flores, Oakland, 1981; L.A. Raiders, 1984
Bill Walsh, San Francisco, 1982, 1985
Joe Gibbs, Washington, 1983, 1988

Most Games, Losing Team, Coach
4 Bud Grant, Minnesota, 1970, 1974-75, 1977
Don Shula, Baltimore, 1969; Miami, 1972, 1983, 1985
3 Tom Landry, Dallas, 1971, 1976, 1979
2 Dan Reeves, Denver, 1987-88

Scoring

Most Points, Career
24 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games (4-td)
22 Ray Wersching, San Francisco, 2 games (7-pat, 5-fg)

Most Points, Game
18 Roger Craig, San Francisco vs. Miami, 1985 (3-td)
15 Don Chandler, Green Bay vs. Oakland, 1968 (3-pat, 4-fg)

Touchdowns

Most Touchdowns, Career
4 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games (4-r)
3 John Stallworth, Pittsburgh, 4 games (3-p)
Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh, 4 games (3-p)
Cliff Branch, Oakland-L.A. Raiders, 3 games (3-p)
Roger Craig, San Francisco, 1 game (1-r, 2-p)

Most Touchdowns, Game
3 Roger Craig, San Francisco vs. Miami, 1985 (1-r, 2-p)

Points After Touchdown

Most Points After Touchdown, Career
8 Don Chandler, Green Bay, 2 games (8 att)
Roy Gerela, Pittsburgh, 3 games (9 att)
Chris Bahr, Oakland-L.A. Raiders, 2 games (8 att)
7 Ray Wersching, San Francisco, 2 games (7 att)

Most Points After Touchdown, Game
6 Ali Haji-Sheikh, Washington vs. Denver, 1988 (6 att)
5 Don Chandler, Green Bay vs. Kansas City, 1967 (5 att)
Roy Gerela, Pittsburgh vs. Dallas, 1979 (5 att)
Chris Bahr, L.A. Raiders vs. Washington, 1984 (5 att)
Ray Wersching, San Francisco vs. Miami, 1985 (5 att)
Kevin Butler, Chicago vs. New England, 1986 (5 att)

Field Goals Attempted, Career
7 Roy Gerela, Pittsburgh, 3 games
6 Jim Turner, N.Y. Jets-Denver, 2 games
Rich Karlis, Denver, 2 games

Most Field Goals Attempted, Game
5 Jim Turner, N.Y. Jets vs. Baltimore, 1969
Efren Herrera, Dallas vs. Denver, 1978

Most Field Goals, Career
5 Ray Wersching, San Francisco, 2 games (5 att)
4 Don Chandler, Green Bay, 2 games (4 att)
Jim Turner, N.Y. Jets-Denver, 2 games (6 att)
Uwe von Schamann, Miami, 2 games (4 att)

Most Field Goals, Game
4 Don Chandler, Green Bay vs. Oakland, 1968
Ray Wersching, San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, 1982

Longest Field Goal
48 Jan Stenerud, Kansas City vs. Minnesota, 1970
Rich Karlis, Denver vs. N.Y. Giants, 1987
47 Jim Turner, Denver vs. Dallas, 1978
46 Chris Bahr, Oakland vs. Philadelphia, 1981

Safeties

Most Safeties, Game
1 Dwight White, Pittsburgh vs. Minnesota, 1975
Reggie Harrison, Pittsburgh vs. Dallas, 1976
Henry Waechter, Chicago vs. New England, 1986
George Martin, N.Y. Giants vs. Denver, 1987

Rushing

Attempts

Most Attempts, Career
101 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games
64 John Riggins, Washington, 2 games
57 Larry Csonka, Miami, 3 games

Most Attempts, Game
38 John Riggins, Washington vs. Miami, 1983
34 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh vs. Minnesota, 1975
33 Larry Csonka, Miami vs. Minnesota, 1974

Yards Gained

Most Yards Gained, Career
354 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games
297 Larry Csonka, Miami, 3 games
230 John Riggins, Washington, 2 games

Most Yards Gained, Game
204 Timmy Smith, Washington vs. Denver, 1988
191 Marcus Allen, L.A. Raiders vs. Washington, 1984
166 John Riggins, Washington vs. Miami, 1983

Longest Run From Scrimmage
74 Marcus Allen, L.A. Raiders vs. Washington, 1984 (TD)
58 Tom Matte, Baltimore vs. N.Y. Jets, 1969
Timmy Smith, Washington vs. Denver, 1988 (TD)

Highest Average Gain, Career (20 attempts)
9.6 Marcus Allen, L.A. Raiders, 1 game (20-191)
9.3 Timmy Smith, Washington, 1 game (22-204)

Highest Average Gain, Game (10 attempts)
10.5 Tom Matte, Baltimore vs. N.Y. Jets, 1969 (11-116)
9.6 Marcus Allen, L.A. Raiders vs. Washington, 1984 (20-191)

Touchdowns

Most Touchdowns, Career
4 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games
2 Elijah Pitts, Green Bay, 1 game
Jim Kiick, Miami, 3 games
Larry Csonka, Miami, 3 games
Pete Banaszak, Oakland, 2 games
Marcus Allen, L.A. Raiders, 1 game
John Riggins, Washington, 2 games
Jim McMahon, Chicago, 1 game
Timmy Smith, Washington, 1 game

Most Touchdowns, Game
2 Elijah Pitts, Green Bay vs. Kansas City, 1967
Larry Csonka, Miami vs. Minnesota, 1974
Pete Banaszak, Oakland vs. Minnesota, 1977
Franco Harris, Pittsburgh vs. Los Angeles, 1980
Marcus Allen, L.A. Raiders vs. Washington, 1984
Jim McMahon, Chicago vs. New England, 1986
Timmy Smith, Washington vs. Denver, 1988

Passing

Attempts

Most Passes Attempted, Career
98 Roger Staubach, Dallas, 4 games
89 Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, 3 games
84 Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh, 4 games

Most Passes Attempted, Game
50 Dan Marino, Miami vs. San Francisco, 1985
38 Ron Jaworski, Philadelphia vs. Oakland, 1981
John Elway, Denver vs. Washington, 1988

Completions

Most Passes Completed, Career
61 Roger Staubach, Dallas, 4 games
49 Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh, 4 games
46 Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, 3 games

Most Passes Completed, Game
29 Dan Marino, Miami vs. San Francisco, 1985
25 Ken Anderson, Cincinnati vs. San Francisco, 1982

Most Consecutive Completions, Game
10 Phil Simms, N.Y. Giants vs. Denver, 1987
8 Len Dawson, Kansas City vs. Green Bay, 1967
Joe Theismann, Washington vs. Miami, 1983

Completion Percentage

Highest Completion Percentage, Career (40 attempts)
66.7 Joe Montana, San Francisco, 2 games (57-38)
63.6 Len Dawson, Kansas City, 2 games (44-28)

Highest Completion Percentage, Game (20 attempts)
88.0 Phil Simms, N.Y. Giants vs. Denver, 1987 (25-22)

Yards Gained

Most Yards Gained, Career
932 Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh, 4 games
734 Roger Staubach, Dallas, 4 games
561 John Elway, Denver, 2 games

Most Yards Gained, Game
340 Doug Williams, Washington vs. Denver, 1988
331 Joe Montana, San Francisco vs. Miami, 1985
318 Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh vs. Dallas, 1979
Dan Marino, Miami vs. San Francisco, 1985

Longest Pass Completion
80 Jim Plunkett (to King), Oakland vs. Philadelphia, 1981 (TD)
Doug Williams (to Sanders), Washington vs. Denver, 1988 (TD)

Average Gain

Highest Average Gain, Career (40 attempts)
11.10 Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh, 4 games (84-932)
9.62 Bart Starr, Green Bay, 2 games (47-452)

Highest Average Gain, Game (20 attempts)
14.71 Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh vs. Los Angeles, 1980 (21-309)
12.80 Jim McMahon, Chicago vs. New England, 1986 (20-256)

Touchdowns

Most Touchdown Passes, Career
9 Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh, 4 games
8 Roger Staubach, Dallas, 4 games
4 Jim Plunkett, Oakland-L.A. Raiders, 2 games
Joe Montana, San Francisco, 2 games
Doug Williams, Washington, 1 game

Most Touchdown Passes, Game
4 Terry Bradshaw, Pittsburgh vs. Dallas, 1979
Doug Williams, Washington vs. Denver, 1988

Had Intercepted

Lowest Percentage, Passes Had Intercepted, Career (40 attempts)
0.00 Jim Plunkett, Oakland-L.A. Raiders, 2 games (46-0)
Joe Montana, San Francisco, 2 games (57-0)
2.13 Bart Starr, Green Bay, 2 games (47-1)

Most Attempts, Without Interception, Game
35 Joe Montana, San Francisco vs. Miami, 1985
28 Joe Namath, N.Y. Jets vs. Baltimore, 1969

Most Passes Had Intercepted, Career
7 Craig Morton, Dallas-Denver, 2 games
6 Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, 3 games

Most Passes Had Intercepted, Game
4 Craig Morton, Denver vs. Dallas, 1978

Pass Receiving

Receptions

Most Receptions, Career
16 Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh, 4 games
15 Chuck Foreman, Minnesota, 3 games
14 Cliff Branch, Oakland-L.A. Raiders, 3 games

Most Receptions, Game
11 Dan Ross, Cincinnati vs. San Francisco, 1982
10 Tony Nathan, Miami vs. San Francisco, 1985
9 Ricky Sanders, Washington vs. Denver, 1988

Yards Gained

Most Yards Gained, Career
364 Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh, 4 games
268 John Stallworth, Pittsburgh, 4 games

Most Yards Gained, Game
193 Ricky Sanders, Washington vs. Denver, 1988
161 Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh vs. Dallas, 1976

Longest Reception
80 Kenny King (from Plunkett), Oakland vs. Philadelphia, 1981 (TD)
Ricky Sanders (from Williams), Washington vs. Denver, 1988 (TD)
76 Jimmy Cefalo (from Woodley), Miami vs. Washington, 1983 (TD)

SUPER BOWL RECORDS

Average Gain

Highest Average Gain, Career (8 receptions)
- 24.4 John Stallworth, Pittsburgh, 4 games (11-268)
- 22.8 Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh, 4 games (16-364)

Highest Average Gain, Game (3 receptions)
- 40.33 John Stallworth, Pittsburgh vs. Los Angeles, 1980 (3-121)
- 40.25 Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh vs. Dallas, 1979 (4-161)

Touchdowns

Most Touchdowns, Career
- 3 John Stallworth, Pittsburgh, 4 games
  Lynn Swann, Pittsburgh, 4 games
  Cliff Branch, Oakland-L.A. Raiders, 3 games
- 2 Max McGee, Green Bay, 2 games
  Bill Miller, Oakland, 1 game
  Butch Johnson, Dallas, 2 games
  Dan Ross, Cincinnati, 1 game
  Roger Craig, San Francisco, 1 game
  Ricky Sanders, Washington, 1 game

Most Touchdowns, Game
- 2 Max McGee, Green Bay vs. Kansas City, 1967
  Bill Miller, Oakland vs. Green Bay, 1968
  John Stallworth, Pittsburgh vs. Dallas 1979
  Cliff Branch, Oakland vs. Philadelphia, 1981
  Dan Ross, Cincinnati vs. San Francisco, 1982
  Roger Craig, San Francisco vs. Miami, 1985
  Ricky Sanders, Washington vs. Denver, 1987

Interceptions By

Most Interceptions By, Career
- 3 Chuck Howley, Dallas, 2 games
  Rod Martin, Oakland-L.A. Raiders, 2 games

Most Interceptions By, Game
- 3 Rod Martin, Oakland vs. Philadelphia, 1981

Yards Gained

Most Yards Gained, Career
- 75 Willie Brown, Oakland, 2 games
- 63 Chuck Howley, Dallas, 2 games
  Jake Scott, Miami, 3 games

Most Yards Gained, Game
- 75 Willie Brown, Oakland vs. Minnesota, 1977
- 63 Jake Scott, Miami vs. Washington, 1973

Longest Return
- 75 Willie Brown, Oakland vs. Minnesota, 1977 (TD)

Touchdowns

Most Touchdowns, Game
- 1 Herb Adderley, Green Bay vs. Oakland, 1968
  Willie Brown, Oakland vs. Minnesota, 1977
  Jack Squirek, L.A. Raiders vs. Washington, 1984
  Reggie Phillips, Chicago vs. New England, 1986

Punting

Most Punts, Career
- 17 Mike Eischeid, Oakland-Minnesota, 3 games
- 15 Larry Seiple, Miami, 3 games

Most Punts, Game
- 9 Ron Widby, Dallas vs. Baltimore, 1971

Longest Punt
- 62 Rich Camarillo, New England vs. Chicago, 1986
- 61 Jerrel Wilson, Kansas City vs. Green Bay, 1967

Average Yardage

Highest Average, Punting, Career (10 punts)
- 46.5 Jerrel Wilson, Kansas City, 2 games (11-511)

Highest Average, Punting, Game (4 punts)
- 48.5 Jerrel Wilson, Kansas City vs. Minnesota, 1970 (4-194)

Punt Returns

Most Punt Returns, Career
- 6 Willie Wood, Green Bay, 2 games
  Jake Scott, Miami, 3 games
  Theo Bell, Pittsburgh, 2 games
  Mike Nelms, Washington, 1 game

Most Punt Returns, Game
- 6 Mike Nelms, Washington vs. Miami, 1983
- 5 Willie Wood, Green Bay vs. Oakland, 1968
  Dana McLemore, San Francisco vs. Miami, 1985
- 4 By six players

Most Fair Catches, Game
- 3 Ron Gardin, Baltimore vs. Dallas, 1971
  Golden Richards, Dallas vs. Pittsburgh, 1976
  Greg Pruitt, L.A. Raiders vs. Washington, 1984

Yards Gained

Most Yards Gained, Career
- 52 Mike Nelms, Washington, 1 game
- 51 Dana McLemore, San Francisco, 1 game

Most Yards Gained, Game
- 52 Mike Nelms, Washington vs. Miami, 1983
- 51 Dana McLemore, San Francisco vs. Miami, 1985

Longest Return
- 34 Darrell Green, Washington vs. L.A. Raiders, 1984
- 31 Willie Wood, Green Bay vs. Oakland, 1968

Kickoff Returns

Most Kickoff Returns, Career
- 8 Larry Anderson, Pittsburgh, 2 games
  Fulton Walker, Miami, 2 games
  Ken Bell, Denver, 2 games
- 7 Preston Pearson, Baltimore-Pittsburgh-Dallas, 5 games
  Stephen Starring, New England, 1 game

Most Kickoff Returns, Game
- 7 Stephen Starring, New England vs. Chicago, 1986

Yards Gained

Most Yards Gained, Career
- 283 Fulton Walker, Miami, 2 games
- 207 Larry Anderson, Pittsburgh, 2 games

Most Yards Gained, Game
- 190 Fulton Walker, Miami vs. Washington, 1983
- 162 Larry Anderson, Pittsburgh vs. Los Angeles, 1980

Longest Return
- 98 Fulton Walker, Miami vs. Washington, 1983 (TD)

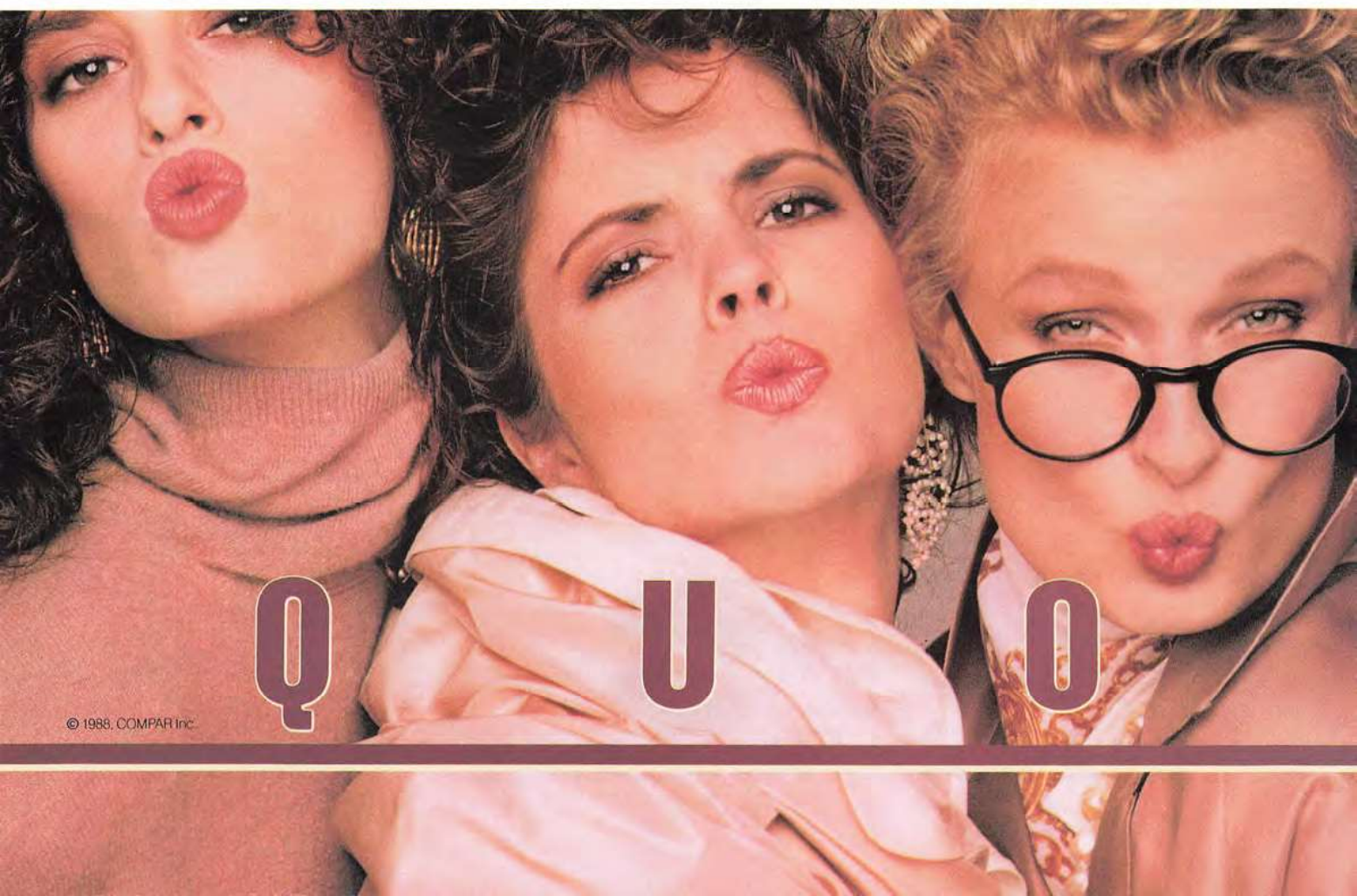
Fumbles

Most Fumbles, Career
- 5 Roger Staubach, Dallas, 4 games

Most Fumbles, Game
- 3 Roger Staubach, Dallas vs. Pittsburgh, 1976

Recoveries

Most Fumbles Recovered, Career
- 2 Jake Scott, Miami, 3 games (1 own, 1 opp)
  Fran Tarkenton, Minnesota, 3 games (2 own)
  Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games (2 own)
  Roger Staubach, Dallas, 4 games (2 own)
  Bobby Walden, Pittsburgh, 2 games (2 own)
  John Fitzgerald, Dallas, 4 games (2 own)



Randy Hughes, Dallas, 3 games (2 opp)
Butch Johnson, Dallas, 2 games (2 own)
Mike Singletary, Chicago, 1 game (2 opp)

Most Fumbles Recovered, Game
2 Jake Scott, Miami vs. Minnesota, 1974 (1 own, 1 opp)
Roger Staubach, Dallas vs. Pittsburgh, 1976 (2 own)
Randy Hughes, Dallas vs. Denver, 1978 (2 opp)
Butch Johnson, Dallas vs. Denver, 1978 (2 own)
Mike Singletary, Chicago vs. New England, 1986 (2 opp)

Yards Gained

Most Yards Gained, Game
49 Mike Bass, Washington vs. Miami, 1973 (opp)

Longest Return
49 Mike Bass, Washington vs. Miami, 1973 (TD)

Most Touchdowns, Game
1 Mike Bass, Washington vs. Miami, 1973 (opp 49 yds)
Mike Hegman, Dallas vs. Pittsburgh, 1979 (opp 37 yds)

Combined Net Yards Gained

Attempts

Most Attempts, Career
108 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games

Most Attempts, Game
39 John Riggins, Washington vs. Miami, 1983

Yards Gained

Most Yards Gained, Career
468 Franco Harris, Pittsburgh, 4 games

Most Yards Gained, Game
239 Ricky Sanders, Washington vs. Denver, 1988

Sacks

Sacks have been compiled since 1983.

Most Sacks, Game
2 Dwaine Board, San Francisco vs. Miami, 1985
Dennis Owens, New England vs. Chicago, 1986
Otis Wilson, Chicago vs. New England, 1986
Leonard Marshall, N.Y. Giants vs. Denver, 1987
Alvin Walton, Washington vs. Denver, 1988

TEAM RECORDS

Games, Victories, Defeats

Most Games
5 Dallas, 1971-72, 1976, 1978-79
Miami, 1972-74, 1983, 1985

Most Consecutive Games
3 Miami, 1972-74

Most Games Won
4 Pittsburgh, 1975-76, 1979-80
3 Oakland/L.A. Raiders, 1977, 1981, 1984

Most Consecutive Games Won
2 Green Bay, 1967-68
Miami, 1973-74
Pittsburgh, 1975-76, 1979-80

Most Games Lost
4 Minnesota, 1970, 1974-75, 1977

Most Consecutive Games Lost
2 Minnesota, 1974-75
Denver, 1987-88

Scoring

Most Points, Game
46 Chicago vs. New England, 1986

Fewest Points, Game
3 Miami vs. Dallas, 1972

Most Points, Both Teams, Game
66 Pittsburgh (35) vs. Dallas (31), 1979

Fewest Points, Both Teams, Game
21 Washington (7) vs. Miami (14), 1973

Largest Margin of Victory, Game
36 Chicago vs. New England, 1986 (46-10)

Touchdowns

Most Touchdowns, Game
6 Washington vs. Denver, 1988

Fewest Touchdowns, Game
0 Miami vs. Dallas, 1972

Most Touchdowns, Both Teams, Game
9 Pittsburgh (5) vs. Dallas (4), 1979

Fewest Touchdowns, Both Teams, Game
2 Baltimore (1) vs. N.Y. Jets (1), 1969

Points After Touchdown

Most Points After Touchdown, Game
6 Washington vs. Denver, 1988

Most Points After Touchdown, Both Teams, Game
9 Pittsburgh (5) vs. Dallas (4), 1979

Fewest Points After Touchdown, Both Teams, Game
2 Baltimore (1) vs. N.Y. Jets (1), 1969
Baltimore (1) vs. Dallas (1), 1971
Minnesota (0) vs. Pittsburgh (2), 1975

Field Goals

Most Field Goals Attempted, Game
5 N.Y. Jets vs. Baltimore, 1969
Dallas vs. Denver, 1978

Most Field Goals Attempted, Both Teams, Game
7 N.Y. Jets (5) vs. Baltimore (2), 1969

Fewest Field Goals Attempted, Both Teams, Game
1 Minnesota (0) vs. Miami (1), 1974

Most Field Goals, Game
4 Green Bay vs. Oakland, 1968
San Francisco vs. Cincinnati, 1982

Passing

Attempts

Most Passes Attempted, Game
50 Miami vs. San Francisco, 1985

Fewest Passes Attempted, Game
7 Miami vs. Minnesota, 1974

Most Passes Attempted, Both Teams, Game
85 Miami (50) vs. San Francisco (35), 1985

Fewest Passes Attempted, Both Teams, Game
35 Miami (7) vs. Minnesota (28), 1974

Completions

Most Passes Completed, Game
29 Miami vs. San Francisco, 1985

Fewest Passes Completed, Game
4 Miami vs. Washington, 1983

Most Passes Completed, Both Teams, Game
53 Miami (29) vs. San Francisco (24), 1985

Fewest Passes Completed, Both Teams, Game
19 Miami (4) vs. Washington (15), 1983

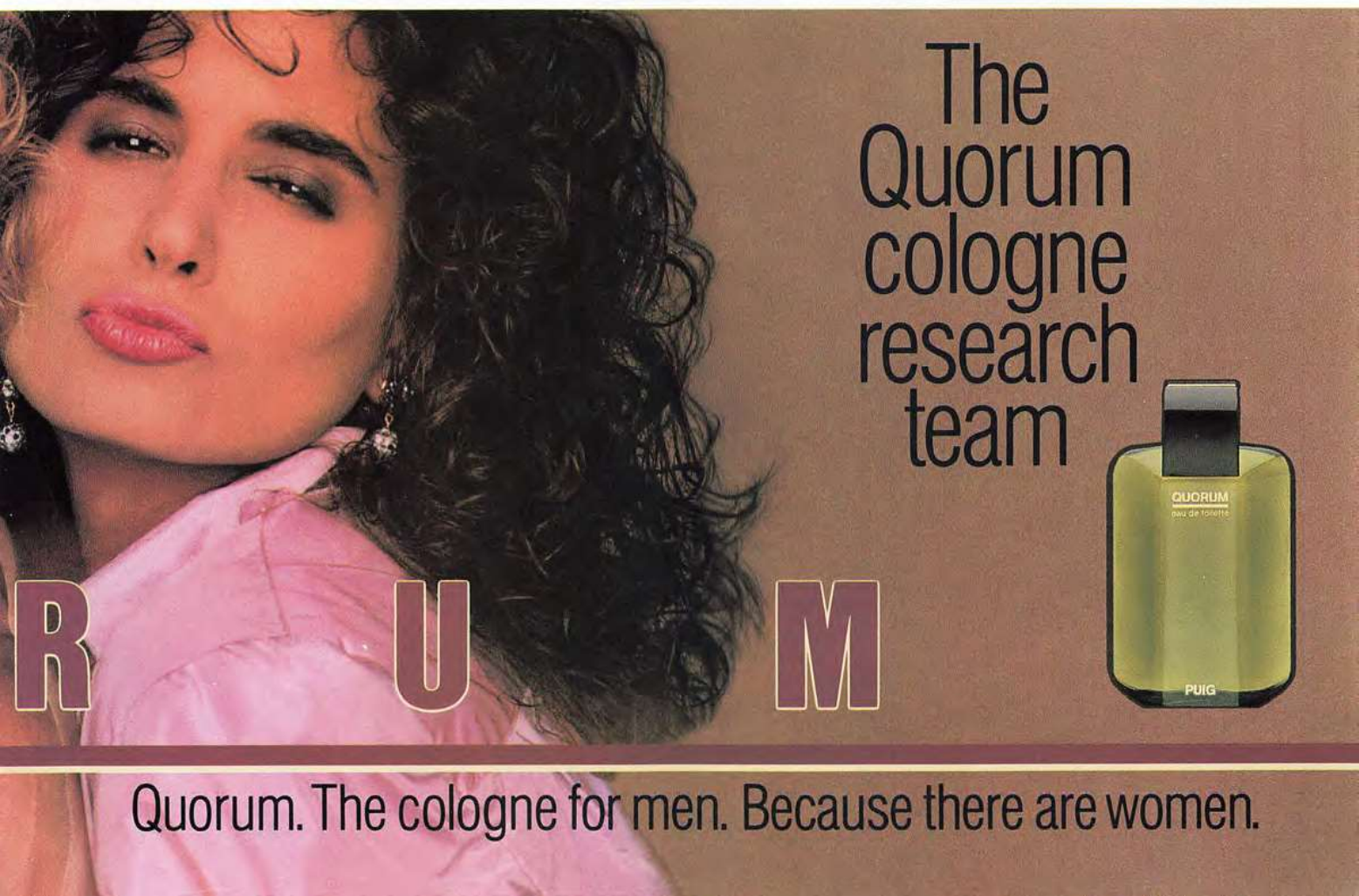
Net Yards Gained Rushing and Passing

Most Yards Gained, Game
602 Washington vs. Denver, 1988

Fewest Yards Gained, Game
119 Minnesota vs. Pittsburgh, 1975

Most Yards Gained, Both Teams, Game
929 Washington (602) vs. Denver (327), 1988

Fewest Yards Gained, Both Teams, Game
452 Minnesota(119) vs. Pittsburgh(333), 1975 ♦



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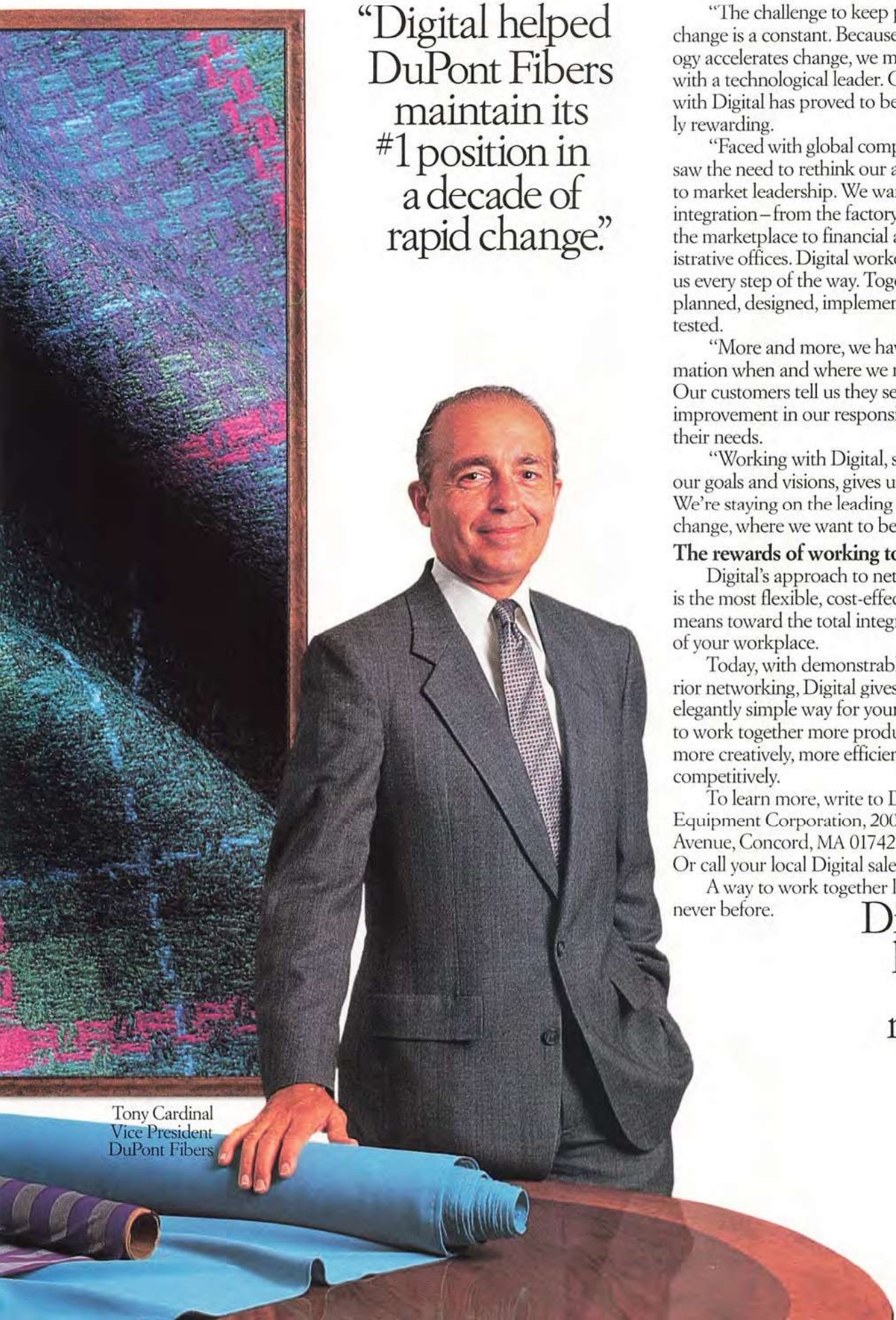

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WARM-UP

OFFICIAL SIGNALS

Touchdown, Field Goal, or Successful Try

Safety

Time Out

Dead Ball or Neutral Zone Established

First Down

Personal Foul

Ball Illegally Touched, Kicked, or Batted

Delay of Game

No Time Out or Time In With Whistle

Offside or Encroachment

Holding

Penalty Refused, Incomplete Pass, Play Over, or Missed Field Goal

Illegal Use of Hands, Arms, or Body

Pass Juggled Inbounds, Caught Out of Bounds

Illegal Forward Pass

Interference With Forward Pass or Fair Catch

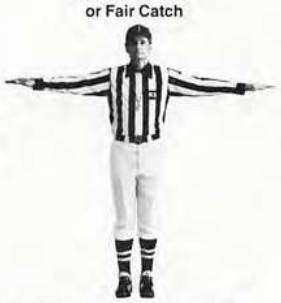
Invalid Fair Catch Signal

Loss of Down

Illegal Contact

Illegal Motion at Snap

Crawling, Pushing, or Helping Runner



Unsportsmanlike Conduct (Non-contact Fouls)

Tripping

Illegal Crackback

Intentional Grounding of Pass

Illegal Cut or Blocking Below the Waist

Touching a Forward Pass or Scrimmage Kick

Player Disqualified

Ineligible Receiver or Ineligible Member of Kicking Team Downfield

False Start; Illegal Shift, Procedure, or Formation

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THE SCOUTING REPORT

CINCINNATI
BENGALS

SAN FRANCISCO
49ERS

The Matchups

Starting Lineups

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CINCINNATI
Bengals
BENGALS

CINCINNATI BENGALS

THERE'S BOOMER AND Ickey and the Shuffle and the Attack Offense and the innovative coaching of Sam Wyche and all those other things that go into making the Cincinnati offense run on 120 octane. That's all great, but the real key to a Super Bowl championship for the Bengals is their defense.

Cincinnati can score against anybody. The question is: Can the Bengals stop the 49ers and Joe Montana? More particularly, can they stop Jerry Rice?

Cincinnati has played its best defense of the year in the playoffs—but it has been mostly against the run. The Bengals held Seattle to just 18 rushing yards and Buffalo to just 45. But their deep defense will have to match the strong up-front play that features nose tackle Tim Krumrie.

The fiery leadership of Sam Wyche helped the Bengals rebound from a 4-11 season to an AFC championship.

They have one of the fastest defenses in the NFL, especially with cornerbacks Lewis Billups and Eric Thomas and strong safety David Fulcher. Wyche hopes that trio can contain Montana and Rice.

Offensively, the Bengals ranked number-one in the NFL in 1988 in scoring, total offense, and rushing.

Boomer Esiason was the highest-rated passer in the NFL. He passed for 3,572 yards and 28 touchdowns in the regular season. But he took a back seat in the playoffs, with the running game overwhelming the opposition.

Ickey Woods, a rookie, finished fourth among AFC rushers with 1,066 yards and 15 touchdowns and led a running attack that produced eight 200-yard games during the season. He provides power inside and he has enough speed to go outside. He also caught 21 passes for 199 yards. James Brooks rushed for 931 yards and caught 29 passes for 287 more.

An unheralded key to Cincinnati's offense is tight end Rodney Holman, a strong blocker who caught 39 passes for a 13.5 average.

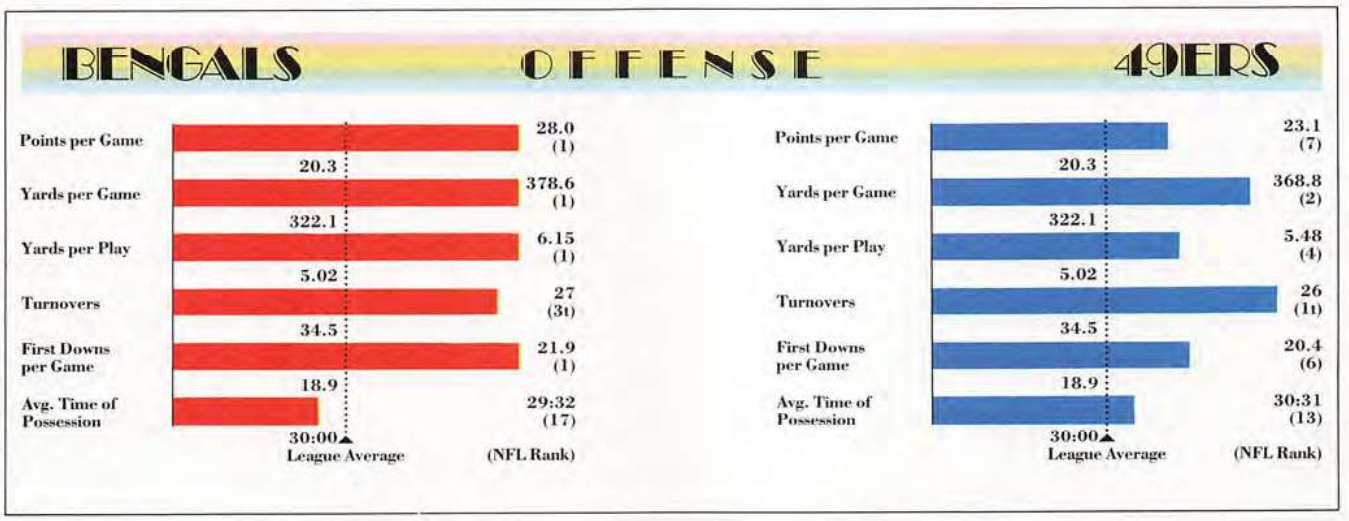
San Francisco's problems will start with the huge front line of the Bengals, led by Pro Bowl starters tackle Anthony Muñoz and guard Max Montoya. They have the talent and power to blow defenders off the line of scrimmage. They make the running game go.

This is a team that does not have to throw to win.

An added touch is the coaching: Wyche versus his mentor, Bill Walsh. Will Wyche's hurry-up tactics throw Walsh's defense off balance? The hurry-up is used to beat situation substitution. But it also keeps defensive linemen in their stances for long periods of time and is tiring for the big men.

Against four NFC opponents this year, the Bengals were 4-0, beating Phoenix, Philadelphia, Dallas, and Washington.

Sept. 4 The defense held twice on goal-line stands at the 1, the second time in the final minute. Cincinnati 21, Phoenix 14.
Sept. 11 Boomer Esiason passed for four touchdowns, but the Bengals needed another goal-line stand. Cincinnati 28, Philadelphia 24.
Sept. 18 Esiason hit Eddie Brown for a 65-yard touchdown, and Eric Thomas made a late interception. Cincinnati 17, Pittsburgh 12.
Sept. 25 James Brooks, Stanley Wilson, and rookie Ickey Woods led a 213-yard rushing attack. Cincinnati 24, Cleveland 17.
Oct. 2 Esiason passed for 332 yards and three touchdowns, and the Bengals totaled 496 yards. Cincinnati 45, L.A. Raiders 21.
Oct. 9 Woods ran for 139 yards, and Esiason threw for three touchdowns to run the Bengals' record to 6-0. Cincinnati 36, N.Y. Jets 19.
Oct. 16 Esiason threw two touchdown passes, but was intercepted five times in first loss. New England 27, Cincinnati 21.
Oct. 23 Brooks ran for 102 yards and three touchdowns, and the Bengals took a 28-0 first-quarter lead. Cincinnati 44, Houston 21.
Oct. 30 The Browns had a blocked-punt return for a touchdown and an 84-yard kickoff return to set up a score. Cleveland 23, Cincinnati 16.
Nov. 6 Brown caught seven passes for 216 yards, and Esiason passed for 318 and three touchdowns. Cincinnati 42, Pittsburgh 7
Nov. 13 The Bengals blew a 28-16 lead, losing on Nick Lowery's last-second field goal. Kansas City 31, Cincinnati 28.
Nov. 20 Brooks ran for 148 yards, including a 51-yard score, and the defense produced six sacks. Cincinnati 38, Dallas 24.
Nov. 27 Tim Krumrie forced a fumble, and Lewis Billups recovered, thwarting the Bills' comeback. Cincinnati 35, Buffalo 21.
Dec. 4 Woods ran for 141 yards and two touchdowns as the Bengals clinched a playoff berth. Cincinnati 27, San Diego 10.
Dec. 11 Esiason was sacked three times, and threw an interception in the first half. Houston 41, Cincinnati 6.
Dec. 17 In overtime, Jim Breech kicked the Bengals to their first AFC Central title in seven years. Cincinnati 20, Washington 17.
Dec. 31 Wilson scored two touchdowns for a 21-0 halftime lead, and Woods ran for 126 yards. Cincinnati 21, Seattle 13.
Jan. 8 Ickey Woods ran for 102 yards and two touchdowns and the defense shut down the Bills in the second half. Cincinnati 21, Buffalo 10.



PAUL SPINELLI/NFLP

OLMAR
SAN FRANCISCO
49ERS

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

WHEN IT IS ALL GOING right in San Francisco—when Bill Walsh is pushing all the right buttons, when Joe Montana's arm looks like a magic wand, when Jerry Rice plays as if he's from a higher league, when the other components in the 49ers' machine are functioning like the latest computer hardware—then this is an awesome football team.

A word of warning to the Cincinnati Bengals: Things are going right in San Francisco these days.

The team that was merely very good in the regular season (second in the NFL in total offense, third in total defense) has been an avalanche in two playoff games, destroying two solid teams, Minnesota and Chicago, by a combined 62-12. Against the two best defensive teams in the league, Montana completed 33 of 54 passes for 466 yards and six touchdowns, five of them to Rice.

Bill Walsh has been in San Francisco for more seasons (10) and more victories (101) than any 49ers head coach.

If the Green Bay Packers were the team of the 1960s, and the Pittsburgh Steelers were the team of the 1970s, the 49ers stand on the threshold of being the team of the 1980s. A victory today would be their third without a loss in the Super Bowl in this decade (they defeated the Bengals 26-21 in XVI, and the Dolphins 38-16 in XIX; Montana was the MVP in both games). Under Walsh, San Francisco has won more games (99) in the 1980s than any other team.

Montana-to-Rice is the biggest piece in the 49ers' puzzle, but it is only part of the picture.

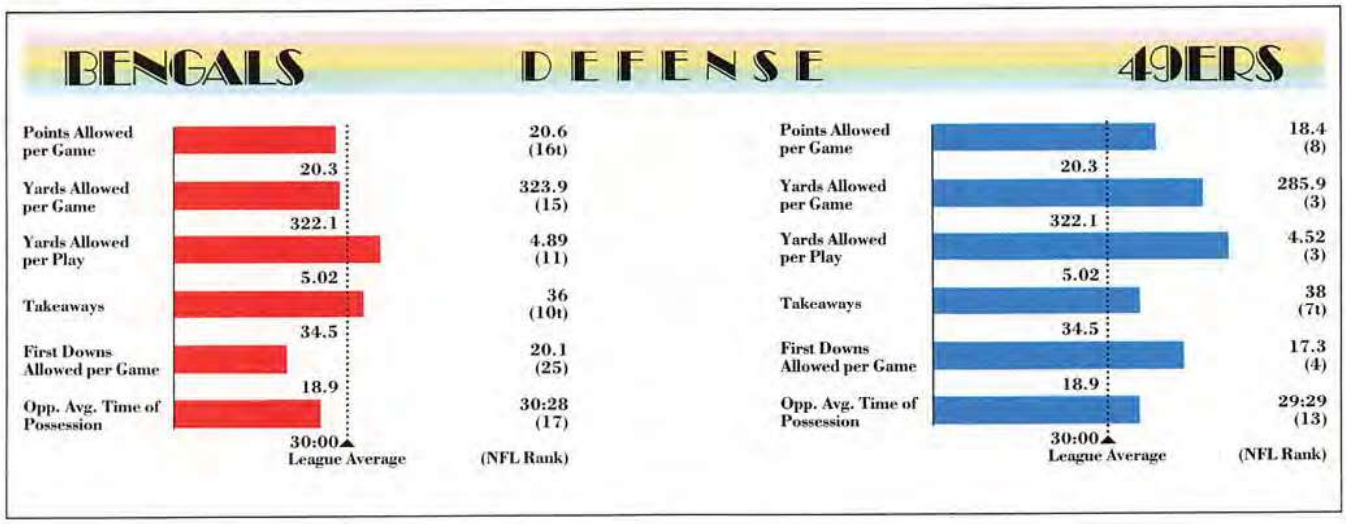
Running backs Roger Craig and Tom Rathman, both out of Nebraska, combined for 2,845 yards rushing and receiving this year (Craig, many people's choice for MVP in the NFC, ran for 1,502 yards).

The offensive line, led by two standout young tackles, Harris Barton (second year) and Steve Wallace (third), is vastly underrated.

The defense, under coordinator George Seifert, is an ideal blend of star-quality experience (nose tackle Michael Carter, linebackers Michael Walter and Keena Turner, safeties Jeff Fuller and Ronnie Lott) and kids who don't play like kids anymore (linebackers Charles Haley and Bill Romanowski, defensive linemen Kevin Fagan, Daniel Stubbs, and Pierce Holt).

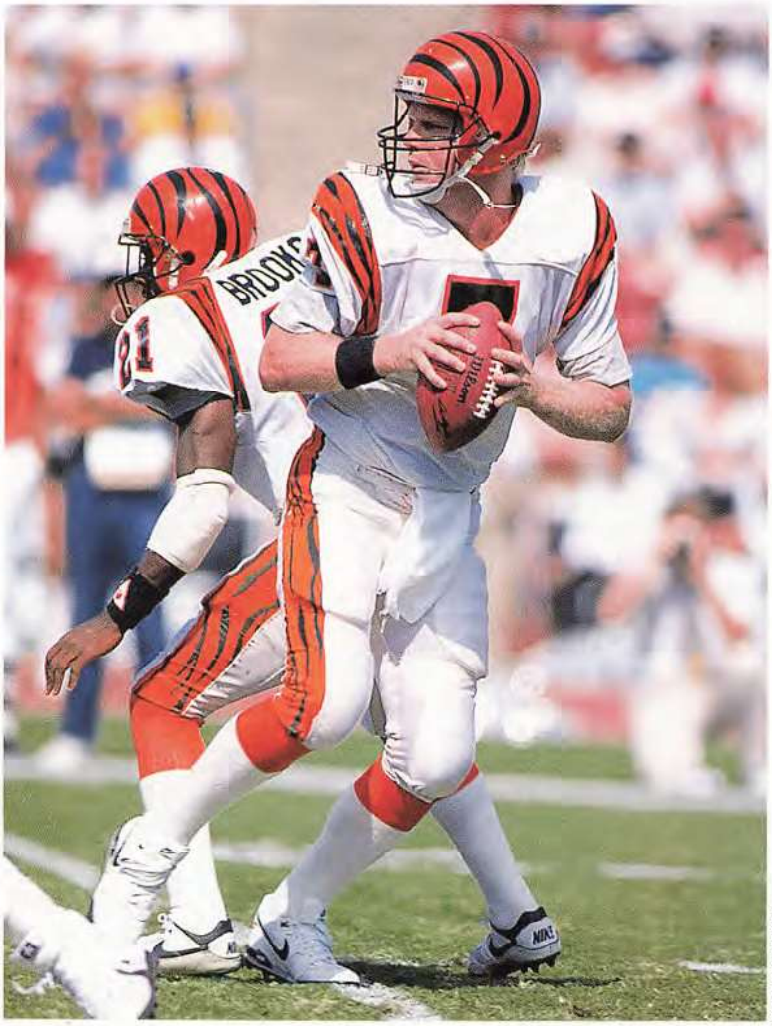
Not that this team is invincible. It began the season 6-5. Then Walsh reinstated Montana, 32, thought by some to be in the downside of a Hall of Fame career, as quarterback. Rice's injured ankle mended. A Monday night victory over defending Super Bowl XXII champion Washington in week 12 seemed to turn the season around. And in the playoffs the old rhythm was back in full swing.

Sept. 4 Joe Montana threw three touchdown passes in the third quarter. San Francisco 34, New Orleans 33.
Sept. 11 Montana threw a 78-yard touchdown pass to Jerry Rice with 42 seconds left. San Francisco 20, N.Y. Giants 17.
Sept. 18 The Falcons scored 21 points in the second quarter and intercepted Montana four times. Atlanta 34, San Francisco 17.
Sept. 26 Montana passed for four touchdowns, three to Rice, and the 49ers gave up 29 yards rushing. San Francisco 38, Seattle 7.
Oct. 2 John Taylor returned a punt 77 yards for a score to break open a defensive struggle. San Francisco 20, Detroit 13.
Oct. 9 Rich Karlis kicked three field goals, including a 22-yarder after 8:11 of overtime. Denver 16, San Francisco 13.
Oct. 16 Roger Craig ran for 190 yards and three touchdowns on only 22 carries. San Francisco 24, L.A. Rams 21.
Oct. 24 The Bears held the 49ers to only 213 net yards and a first-quarter touchdown by Rice. Chicago 10, San Francisco 9.
Oct. 30 Steve Young ran 49 yards for the winning touchdown in the final two minutes. San Francisco 24, Minnesota 21.
Nov. 6 Neil Lomax threw two touchdown passes in the final three minutes to help overcome a 23-0 deficit. Phoenix 24, San Francisco 23.
Nov. 13 Chris Bahr kicked three field goals and the Raiders stopped the 49ers cold. L.A. Raiders 9, San Francisco 3.
Nov. 21 Montana accounted for three touchdowns, and Taylor scored on a 95-yard punt return. San Francisco 37, Washington 21.
Nov. 27 Montana threw for three touchdowns—one 96 yards to Rice—and Craig scored three times. San Francisco 48, San Diego 10.
Dec. 4 The defense held Atlanta to 177 yards and the offense controlled the ball for 36:49. San Francisco 13, Atlanta 3.
Dec. 11 Three second-quarter touchdowns and three second-half field goals gave the 49ers a playoff berth. San Francisco 30, New Orleans 17.
Dec. 18 Jim Everett threw four touchdown passes, and the Rams sacked Montana eight times. L.A. Rams 38, San Francisco 16.
Jan. 1 Montana threw three touchdown passes to Rice, and Craig ran for two more. San Francisco 34, Minnesota 9.
Jan. 8 Montana threw three touchdown passes, two to Rice, and the defense manhandled the Bears' offense. San Francisco 28, Chicago 3.



MICHAEL ZAGARIS

PASSING



PAUL JASIENSKI

led the NFL in passing with a 97.4 rating, while throwing 28 touchdowns and only 14 interceptions. He is at his best when he passes on first down. He does a tremendous job faking and ball-handling on play-action passes.

The Bengals' passing attack benefits from the way it spreads the ball around. The wide receivers both are speed burners. Eddie Brown led the AFC with 1,273 yards while averaging an NFL-leading 24.0 yards per catch. Tim McGee, who replaced the still-reliable Cris Collinsworth this year, averaged 19.1.

The other Cincinnati receivers also contribute. Tight end Rodney Holman made 39 receptions, while running back James Brooks made 29. Brooks, one of the best receiving backs in the NFL, caught fewer due to less playing time this year, but he still is one of the most dangerous run-catch threats in the game.

PASSING	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	Pct.	Avg.	TD	%TD	Int.	Long	Rating
Esiason	388	223	3572	57.5	9.21	28	7.2	14	t86	97.4
Schonert	4	2	20	50.0	5.00	0	0.0	0	17	64.6

t-touchdown

RECEIVING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Brown	53	1273	24.0	t86	9
Holman	39	527	13.5	33	3
McGee	36	686	19.1	t78	6
Brooks	29	287	9.9	t28	6
Woods	21	199	9.5	25	0
Collinsworth	13	227	17.5	36	1
Wilson	9	110	12.2	28	1
Riggs	9	82	9.1	16	0
Hillary	5	76	15.2	31	1
Jennings	5	75	15.0	31	0
Martin	2	22	11.0	t15	1
Logan	2	20	10.0	17	0
Kattus	2	8	4.0	11	0

t-touchdown

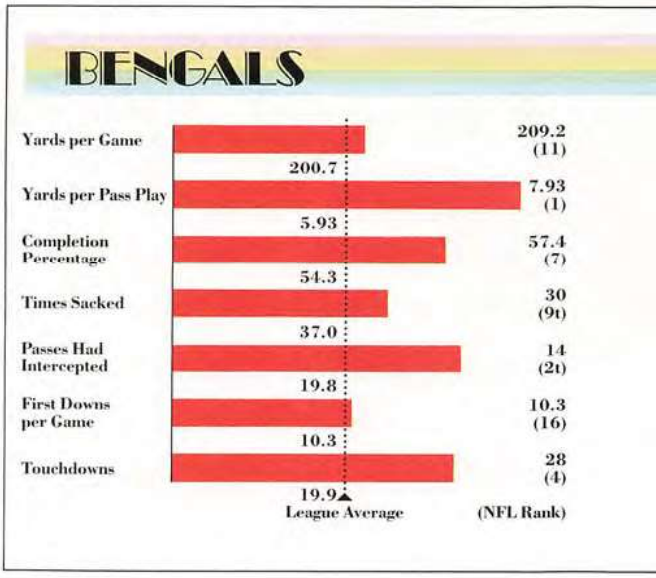
The Associated Press, among others, named Boomer Esiason NFL player of the year. The left-handed passer had the highest quarterback rating in the league while passing for 3,572 yards and 28 touchdowns.

BENGALS As if the Bengals' league-leading rushing game isn't intimidating enough, their passing attack features Boomer Esiason, many people's choice as the NFL's most valuable player this season.

Esiason's most important quality is his leadership. Not only is he a tough competitor, but he is the Bengals' spiritual leader. It was Esiason who pulled the team together in the offseason when he went to Sam Wyche and general manager Paul Brown to heal the wounds suffered in the strike of 1987.

Esiason also is the man who makes Wyche's Attack Offense go. Designed to prevent defensive substitution, it also gives the quarterback a longer time to look over the defense. But it requires a smart signal-caller to make it work. At the line of scrimmage, Esiason must study the defense and call the formation, the play, and the pass blocking.

Esiason did this so successfully in 1988 that he



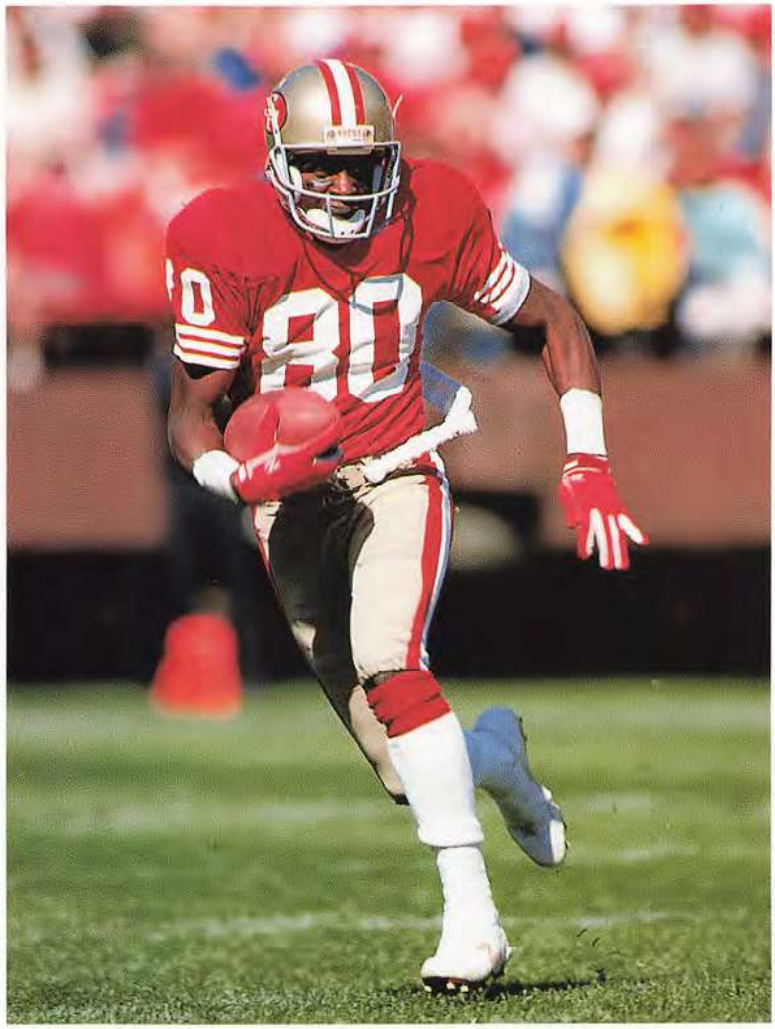
49ERS Seven years ago, Joe Montana was named most valuable player of Super Bowl XVI after completing 14 of 22 passes for 157 yards against the Bengals. Of course, Cincinnati's defensive personnel has changed dramatically since then, but Montana remains one of the NFL's best passers and the heart and soul of the 49ers' offense.

Montana is an excellent short-yardage, play-action quarterback who might be the best in the game at establishing tempo. The key for San Francisco is protecting the 10-year veteran. When Montana has time, he plays almost error-free football, but the offensive line surrendered 47 sacks this year.

Jerry Rice is a deadly big-play receiver who commands double coverage. Some have pointed to a decline (from 22 to 9) in his touchdown receptions between 1987 and 1988, but this is misleading. Rice had another brilliant season, with 64 catches for 1,306 yards (second in the league). And he was hot in the playoffs, scoring three times against Minnesota and twice versus Chicago. Watch Rice near the goal line, where he often can wind up with single coverage after going in motion.

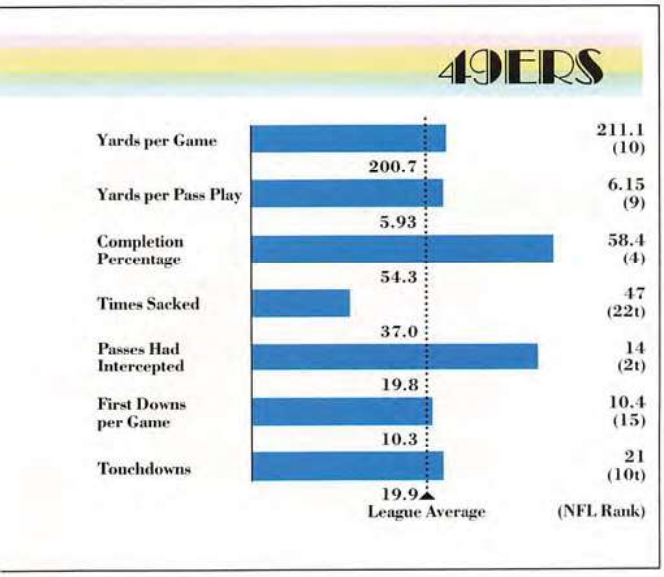
San Francisco got 118 receptions out of its two primary running backs, Roger Craig (76) and Tom Rathman (42). The team runs plenty of screens to these two excellent receivers, and Montana will dump off when in trouble. Craig, especially, can run through defensive backs in the open field.

Veteran wide receiver Mike Wilson had 33 receptions, but was replaced as a starter late in the season by John Taylor, a scintillating runner who averaged 23.2 yards on 14 receptions. Tight ends John Frank (16 catches) and Ron Heller (14) are solid, if unspectacular.



PAUL SPINELLI/NFLP

Jerry Rice was selected to start in the Pro Bowl for the third straight year after catching 64 passes for 1,306 yards and nine touchdowns. His 96-yard touchdown catch was the longest in the NFL in 1988.



PASSING	Att.	Comp.	Yds.	Pct.	Avg.	TD	%TD	Int.	Long	Rating
Montana	397	238	2981	59.9	7.51	18	4.5	10	t96	87.9
Young	101	54	680	53.5	6.73	3	3.0	3	t73	72.2
Rice	3	1	14	33.3	4.67	0	0.0	1	14	9.7
Sydney	1	0	0	0.0	0.00	0	0.0	0	0	39.6

t-touchdown

RECEIVING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Craig	76	534	7.0	22	1
Rice	64	1306	20.4	t96	9
Rathman	42	382	9.1	24	0
Wilson	33	405	12.3	31	3
Frank	16	195	12.2	38	3
Taylor	14	325	23.2	t73	2
Heller	14	140	10.0	22	0
Greer	8	120	15.0	31	0
Jones	8	57	7.1	t18	2
DuBose	6	57	9.5	13	0
Flagler	4	72	18.0	57	0
Chandler	4	33	8.3	9	0
Sydney	2	18	9.0	9	0
McIntyre	1	17	17.0	t17	1
Nicholas	1	14	14.0	14	0

t-touchdown

RUSHING

JOHN BIEVER

Ickey Woods hit the NFL like a sledgehammer in 1988. The 232-pound rookie gained 1,066 yards, averaged 5.3 yards per carry, and led the AFC with 15 touchdowns. He also introduced a new dance—the "Ickey Shuffle."

BENGALS The facet of the game that appears capable of causing San Francisco the most problems today is the Cincinnati running game. The Bengals had the most productive rushing offense in the NFL in 1988, averaging 170 yards per game and a staggering 4.8 yards per carry.

Cincinnati's ground game begins with perhaps the best offensive line in the NFL. For years the Bengals' line has been anchored by Pro Bowl left tackle Anthony Muñoz, but this year Brian Blados has been a dominant force at right tackle, allowing the Bengals to run to both sides just as effectively. Blados replaced the injured Joe Walter. On normal running downs, the other interior linemen are left guard Bruce Reimers, center Bruce Kozerski, and Pro Bowl right guard Max Montoya.

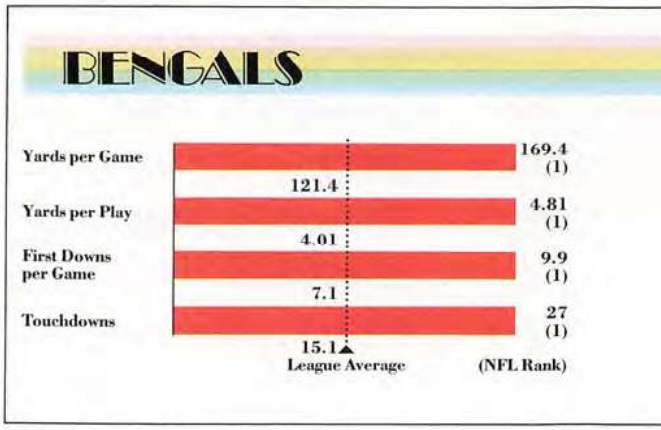
Don't mistake the Bengals for a finesse team. They don't engage in a lot of pulling or trickery. Rather they go for straight-ahead blocking, simply knocking defenders on their backsides. One of the keys to the success the Bengals have had with this tactic has been the development as blockers of tight ends Rodney Holman and Jim Riggs.

The two backs who have benefited most from the outstanding line are rookie Ickey Woods and veteran James Brooks. Woods has the build of a fullback (6-2, 232) but the cuts and speed of a halfback. He gained 1,066 yards with a league-leading 5.3-yard average in 1988, and he rushed for more than 100 in each of the Bengals' playoff victories. Brooks averaged 5.1 yards a carry, and his quickness and acceleration give the Bengals an important change of pace. Something to look for when the Bengals line up in the "I": If Woods is in front of Brooks, they usually run, but if Brooks is up front, they usually pass. Quarterback Boomer Esiason also gets in on the running game. He averaged 5.8 yards a carry.

Stanley Wilson, the Bengals' third running back behind Woods and Brooks, figures prominently in short-yardage situations, when he replaces Brooks. With Wilson in the lineup, Reimers moves to right end, David Douglas to left guard, Dave Smith to left end, and Holman to wingback, giving the Bengals an even bigger line. On the goal line, Smith and Muñoz switch places, with Muñoz at end and Smith at tackle. This is a blue-collar group that is capable of getting into the end zone.

RUSHING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Woods	203	1066	5.3	56	15
Brooks	182	931	5.1	t51	8
Wilson	112	398	3.6	19	2
Esiason	43	248	5.8	24	1
Jennings	17	47	2.8	9	1
Logan	2	10	5.0	9	0
Schonert	2	10	5.0	7	0
Norseth	1	5	5.0	5	0
Brown	1	-5	-5.0	-5	0

t-touchdown



49ERS Throughout the 1980s, Bill Walsh's San Francisco teams have acquired a reputation for complicated passing schemes and finesse football. But the bread and butter of the 1988 49ers was straight-ahead power running. Only Cincinnati, their Super Bowl XXIII opponent, averaged more rushing yards per game than the 49ers' 157.7.

In the center of the action, as usual, is Roger Craig, San Francisco's do-everything running back. In a phenomenal 1988 regular season, he drove, sprinted, and high-stepped his way to 1,502 yards on the ground, averaged 4.8 yards per carry, and scored nine touchdowns. A finely conditioned athlete who loves to hit, he can carry the ball 25 times and be just as strong at the end of a game. Craig had six 100-yard games the past season.

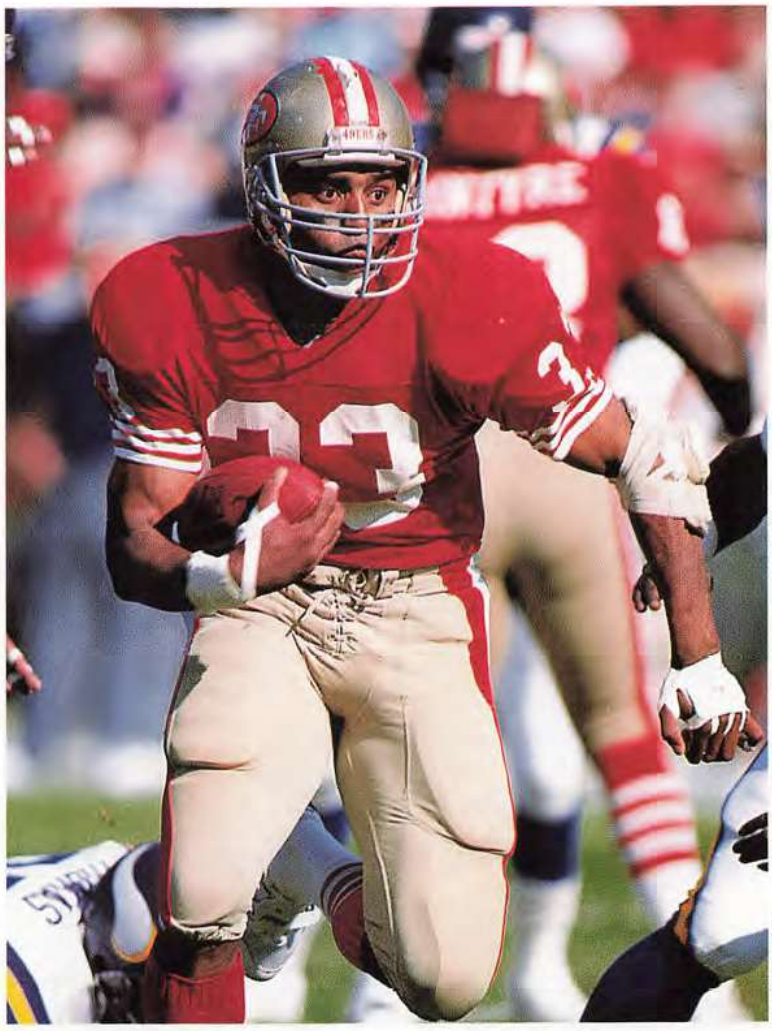
Fullback Tom Rathman doesn't have the speed to be a dominant runner, but he's a smart, tough player who can block with the best of them. Cincinnati is well advised to make sure Rathman is down, because he is strong enough to fight for extra yardage.

While the Bengals like to blow defenders off the offensive line, the 49ers are a trapping team. That is due mostly to the talents of Craig, whose quick cuts are helped by trap blocks.

In the middle of the offensive line is 13-year veteran center Randy Cross, the team's elder statesman. Cross's experience is vital to an otherwise-young line. Guards Guy McIntyre (6-3, 265) and Jesse Sapolu (6-4, 260) are not huge, but they're good technicians who fight hard all game long. Look for these three interior linemen to take turns double-teaming Cincinnati's Tim Krumrie, a strong nose tackle.

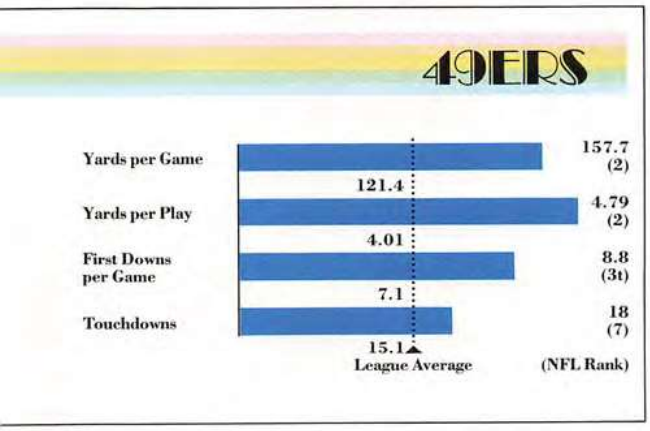
The 49ers' strength is at tackle, where youngsters Harris Barton (6-4, 280) and Steve Wallace (6-5, 276) have developed into excellent blockers. Barton shows good footwork for a big man. Tight end John Frank is smallish (225 pounds), but works hard on blocking.

Joe Montana, once a dangerous scrambler, moved around less than usual in 1988 as he recovered from recent injuries. But with everything on the line in the Super Bowl, the 49ers just might let him run. Backup quarterback Steve Young, if called upon, is a highly mobile left-hander with great speed for the position.



PAUL JASIENSKI

Hard-working Roger Craig had an MVP-caliber season in 1988. His 1,502 rushing yards (second in the NFC) included six 100-yard days, one of them a 190-yard outburst against the Rams. He had nine rushing touchdowns.



RUSHING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Craig	310	1502	4.8	t46	9
Rathman	102	427	4.2	26	2
Young	27	184	6.8	t49	1
Montana	38	132	3.5	15	3
DuBose	24	116	4.8	t37	2
Rice	13	107	8.2	29	1
Sydney	9	50	5.6	13	0
Flagler	3	5	1.7	4	0
Helton	1	0	0.0	0	0

t-touchdown

PASSING DEFENSE

JOHN BIEVER

At 228 pounds, David Fulcher is one of the biggest safeties in the NFL. He's also one of the best. The three-year veteran intercepted five passes, returning one for a score, and had 1½ sacks on blitzes.

BENGALS The keys to a Super Bowl victory for the Bengals are putting the clamps on wide receiver Jerry Rice and finding a way to stop quarterback Joe Montana, who is on one of the hottest streaks of his storied career.

That's all!

Because the Bengals play more man-to-man defense than zone in passing situations, cornerbacks Lewis Billups and Eric Thomas will have primary responsibility for Rice. They have the speed, and their numbers—11 interceptions between them—indicate good cover ability (Thomas's 7 interceptions were second among AFC cornerbacks). They will be aided in coverage by safeties David Fulcher and Solomon Wilcots.

Defensive end Jim Skow leads the pass rush, which will be crucial in slowing Montana. Skow collected a team-high 9½ sacks during the regular season. Jason Buck, who plays on the other end of the line, was second with six. David Grant had five.

Cincinnati has a tendency to blitz more than most NFL teams. The Bengals try to force the action so Boomer Esiason and the team's high-octane offense can get on the field. How much effect sending the linebackers and safeties will have on Montana is one of today's sub-plots.

In Nickel situations, the Bengals go to a 4-1-6. Grant moves into the line, Leo Barker is the only linebacker, and Rickey Dixon and Barney Bussey are added to the secondary.

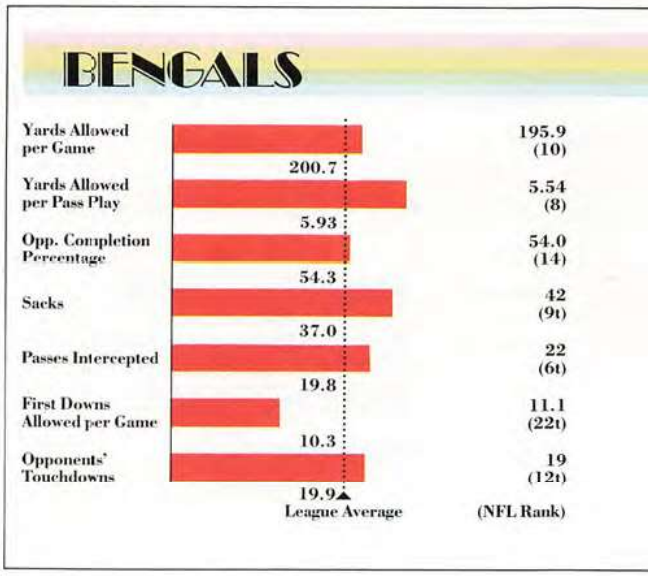
Montana will be patient as he finesses the Bengals, throwing underneath the coverage, which will place pressure on the linebackers, especially anyone assigned to cover 49ers running back Roger Craig.

And there's always the threat of Rice, to whom the Bengals need no introduction. When the two clubs met in the second week of the 1987 season, Rice caught touchdown passes of 34 and 25 yards, the latter coming on the final play to give the 49ers a 27-26 victory.

Montana has one undeniable advantage in Super Bowl XXIII: experience. When he was the MVP of Super Bowl XVI in January, 1982, eight of the Bengals' current defensive starters were in high school.

INTERCEPTIONS	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Thomas	7	61	8.7	37	0
Fulcher	5	38	7.6	t16	1
Billups	4	47	11.8	29	0
Horton	3	13	4.3	11	0
Dixon	1	13	13.0	13	0
Wilcots	1	6	6.0	6	0
Zander	1	3	3.0	3	0

t-touchdown



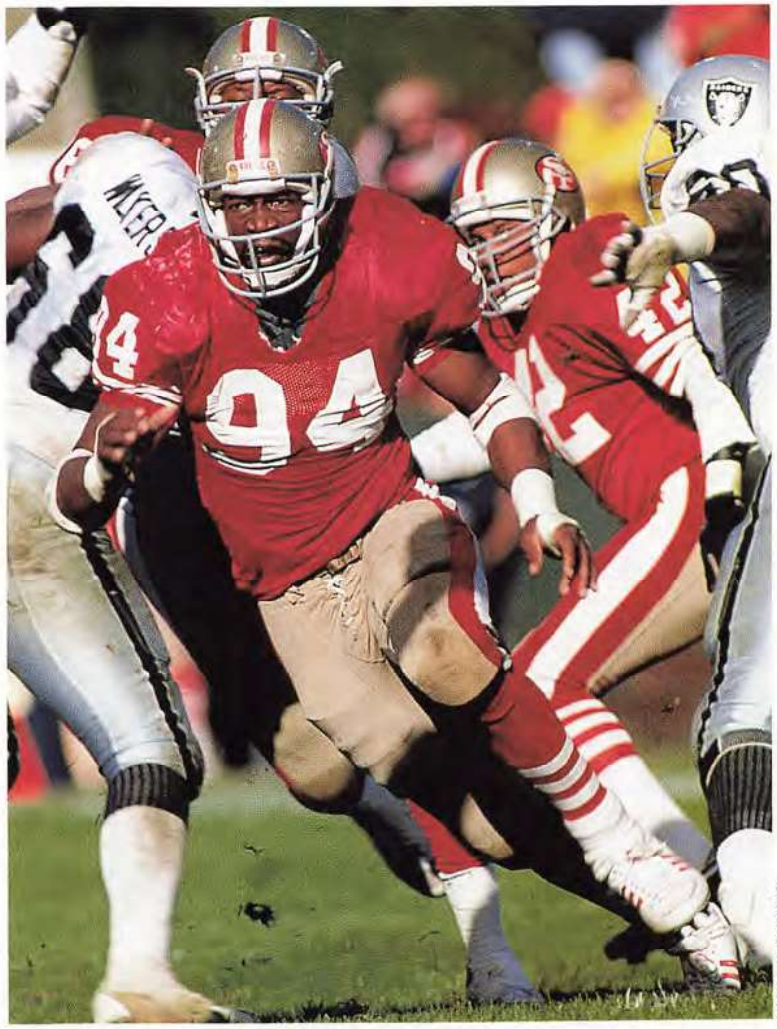
49ERS Just as Joe Montana is the key to the San Francisco offense, free safety Ronnie Lott is the key to the defense. A highly instinctive player with great range and reactions, Lott leads a defense that has a secure balance of age and youth. The 49ers basically play a zone defense, but, like Lott, can play man-to-man and blitz well. Lott's aggressiveness is mirrored by the defense in general. The result is that it can over-run plays and be susceptible to play-action passes, characteristics Cincinnati may try to exploit if it can establish its own running game.

Jeff Fuller, the strong safety, also is an outstanding athlete. Fuller plays the pass as well as he forces the run, has exceptional ability to read the quarterback's eyes, and does not make mental errors. Left cornerback Tim McKyer may be the team's best cover man; his seven interceptions led the team, followed by Lott's five and Fuller's four. Don Griffin, the right cornerback, sometimes gives receivers a big cushion, but he recovers quickly.

They'll have their hands full against the Bengals, who led the NFL in yards per pass (7.93). But it may not be Bengals burner Eddie Brown who will cause them the most trouble. Watch for tight end Rodney Holman slipping to the inside between zones.

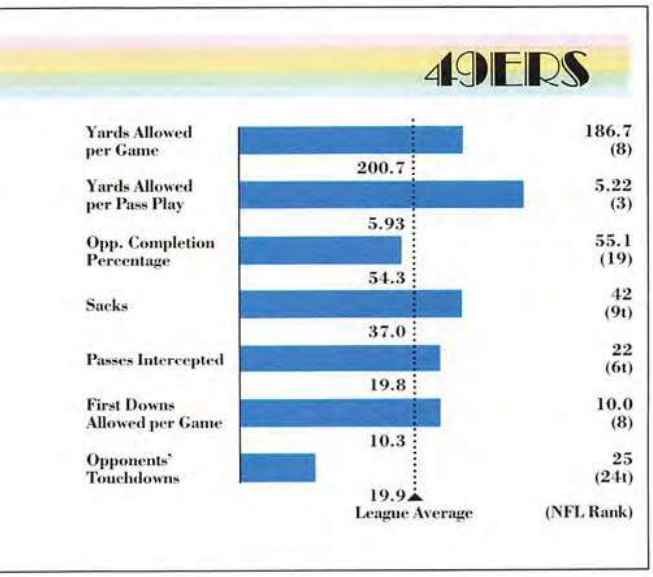
The 49ers needed help last year in the pass-rush department, and they drafted big nose tackle Pierce Holt (6-4, 280) and defensive end Daniel Stubbs (6-4, 260) to fill that need. Both have developed on the job into fine rush men, even though Holt missed the first eight games of the season. Together they complement the 49ers' top pass rusher, linebacker Charles Haley. Simply labeling Haley a linebacker diminishes his role. He is an all-out rusher, a quarterback-seeking missile. Haley has the speed, quickness, and talent to flip-flop positions along the line of scrimmage, from strongside to weakside, and to work from a two- or three-point stance.

Though offenses never can be sure where he'll be lining up, they know that he *will* be coming—hard. The Bengals' quick-huddle offense, may neutralize some of his movement. Haley led the team with 11½ sacks, followed by Michael Carter with 6½, and Larry Roberts and Stubbs with 6 each.



MICHAEL ZAGARIS

Because he lines up at so many different positions, opposing quarterbacks never know where Charles Haley will be coming from—they just know he's coming. His 11½ sacks led the team for the third straight year.



INTERCEPTIONS	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
McKyer	7	11	1.6	7	0
Lott	5	59	11.8	44	0
Fuller	4	18	4.5	10	0
Holmoe	2	0	0.0	0	0
Wright	2	-2	-1.0	0	0
Turner	1	2	2.0	2	0
Carter	1	0	0.0	0	0

RUSHING DEFENSE

PETE J. GROH

Nose tackles rarely lead their teams in tackles—it's not the nature of the position. But Tim Krumrie has done it an amazing four consecutive years. The 268-pound warrior had 152 this season.

BENGALS During the regular season, Cincinnati's rushing defense ranked a mediocre sixth in the AFC, allowing 128 yards a game and 4.2 per carry. But that was the *regular* season.

In the playoffs, the Bengals held two teams known to favor the run—Seattle and Buffalo—to a total of 63 yards on the ground. The Bengals may have come of age at just the right time.

Cincinnati's hopes of blunting the 49ers' ground attack start with nose tackle Tim Krumrie.

"When you talk about the intensity of our defense, Krumrie has to set the pace," says Sam Wyche. "He has a level of desire you just can't measure."

A tenth-round draft choice in his sixth season, Krumrie is the Bengals' leading tackler. His matchup with 49ers center Randy Cross will be one to watch. If Krumrie is effective in clogging up the middle, the 49ers might be forced to look outside for running room...and that's when the Bengals' speed takes over.

Bengals general manager Paul Brown always has believed that speed is a necessary ingredient to championships, and he has assembled one of the fastest units in the league.

The quickest starters are cornerbacks Eric Thomas and Lewis Billups. Both have been timed at 4.3 seconds in the 40. The most active defender is David Fulcher, who brings linebacker size—6 feet 3 inches, 228 pounds—to strong safety. Fulcher, who logs more playing time than any other Bengals defender, was second on the team in tackles.

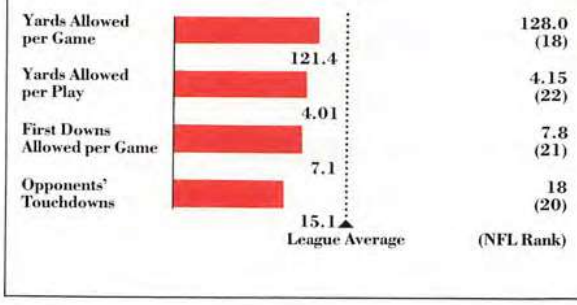
By design, Fulcher is at the center of the action, especially on running plays. The Bengals' defensive scheme, which has been devised by defensive coordinator Dick LeBeau, tries to force things behind the line of scrimmage. Fulcher often will blitz. Solomon Wilcots starts at free safety.

Cincinnati also will send linebacker Reggie Williams, who plays the right outside spot in the 3-4 alignment, on running downs. Williams, 34, is the oldest Bengal; he started in Super Bowl XVI. His experience—13 years in the league—and leadership has a steadying effect on the young Bengals.

Eight of the Bengals' defensive starters have joined the team in the last three years. Two of those are defensive ends Jim Skow and Jason Buck. Their ability to keep Roger Craig from running outside—where he can be lethal—will help dictate the outcome of the game. Carl Zander, who calls the defensive signals, is the leading tackler among the linebackers. He and Joe Kelly man the inside spots, while Williams and Leon White patrol the outside.

In short-yardage situations, the Bengals go to a 4-3 defense, adding David Grant at tackle, pulling Zander and Kelly, moving Williams to middle linebacker, and putting Leo Barker in Williams's spot.

BENGALS



49ERS The 49ers' defense has gained momentum—and in the case of their many young players, maturity—as the season has progressed. As a unit, it is playing its best football of the year. The 49ers move well and have speed at every position. They'll need all the speed they can muster to deal with Ickey Woods's signature off-tackle cutback slashes, plus the strength to take on Anthony Muñoz and Cincinnati's powerful offensive line.

It's a hot match-up: The Bengals, the NFL's top rushing team, against the 49ers, the number-three defense against the rush. By all indications, the 49ers are up to the task. They allowed an average of only 99.3 rushing yards per game this season. In the playoffs they have done even better, holding Minnesota to 54 yards on the ground and Chicago to 91. The 49ers also allowed only eight rushing touchdowns all season, none in the playoffs.

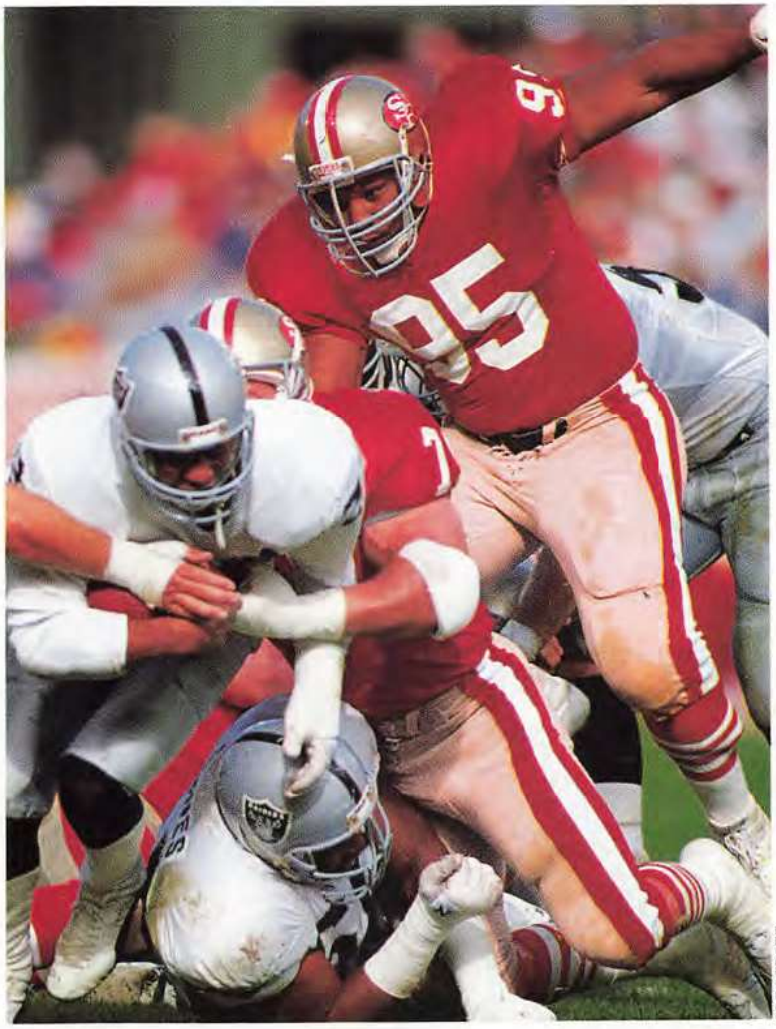
San Francisco defensive coordinator George Seifert is a master at mixing up his fronts and coverages, and at situation substitution. How well he can do these things—or how well he can compensate for *not* being able to do them against Cincinnati's hurry-up offense—will be vital.

As if Woods, Muñoz, and the Attack Offense weren't enough to contend with, 49ers rush defenders will have to contain Boomer Esiason, an effective runner when flushed from the pocket.

The 3-4 is San Francisco's basic alignment. From it, the 49ers shift into four-man and eight-man fronts. Pro Bowl nose tackle Michael Carter is the key player against the run in all of them. Extremely quick off the ball, he often occupies more than one blocker. Flanking Carter in the basic alignment are defensive ends Kevin Fagan and Larry Roberts, with versatile Pro Bowl linebacker Charles Haley crowding the line of scrimmage, usually to the strong side of the formation. A second nose tackle, Pete Kugler, generally joins Carter in the four-man front.

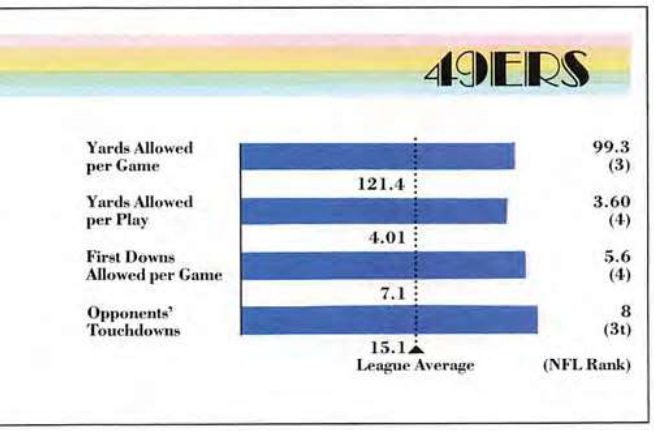
Linebacker Michael Walter is the team's leading tackler (97 total tackles), followed by safety Jeff Fuller (82), linebacker Riki Ellison (74), Pro Bowl safety Ronnie Lott (74), and Carter (71). Walter also has led in tackles in both playoff games. A former free agent now in his sixth year, he is one of San Francisco's most productive players, filling the inside well. Fuller is aggressive, and is the best player in the secondary against the run. Wily veteran linebacker Keena Turner has excellent pursuit and tackling ability.

The 49ers are by no means a finesse defense. To a man, they know how to lay on a hit. Over the course of the 1988 season, 13 different players forced fumbles, led by Lott and rookie linebacker Bill Romanowski with three each. Lott also led in fumble recoveries with four.



GREG TROTT

Michael Carter (95) is a 6-foot 2-inch, 285-pound monster who inhabits the middle of the 49ers' defensive line. The three-time Pro Bowl selection led all San Francisco linemen in tackles, and forced two fumbles.



SPECIAL TEAMS

TONY TOMSIC

Fleet Ira Hillary is a dangerous punt returner. He averaged 9.8 yards on 17 returns this season. He was less successful on kickoffs, compiling a 16.3-yard average on 12 returns.

BENGALS The bottom line on Cincinnati's special teams is that, while they aren't the most spectacular in the NFL, they get the job done. Don't be surprised if head coach Sam Wyche uses a gimmick play or two, as he did in the AFC Championship Game when the Bengals ran from punt formation for a first down.

Placekicker Jim Breech scored 89 points this season (on 56 of 59 extra points and 11 of 16 field goals), his lowest point total since 1983. As one of the smallest players in the league (5-6, 161), Breech doesn't have the strongest leg around, but he is a very accurate kicker inside the 40-yard line (9 successes in 10 attempts in 1988). Whenever the situation calls for a field goal longer than 45 yards, the Bengals use punter Lee Johnson. Johnson connected on a 50-yard field goal for Cincinnati during the regular season. He also handles kickoff duties.

Johnson, who began this season with Cleveland, was released by the Browns in late September and was signed by the Bengals in week 14 after Scott Fulhage, Cincinnati's regular punter, injured his back. Johnson averaged 42.4 yards on 14 punts for the Bengals. He's also adept at placing punts inside the 20-yard line.

Kickoff- and punt-return duties are handled by Stanford Jennings and Ira Hillary. Jennings, who averaged 21.4 yards on 32 kickoffs, had the longest return in the NFL in 1988—98 yards for a touchdown against Kansas City in week 11. Hillary averaged 9.8 yards on 17 punt returns and had a long return of 20 yards. He also averaged 16.3 yards on 12 kickoffs during the regular season.

Cincinnati's punt-coverage team finished sixteenth in the league this season, allowing 8.8 yards a return. The kickoff-coverage squad was even poorer, ending up twenty-fifth in the NFL (21.9 yards per return).

The Bengals' leading coverage men include safety Barney Bussey, cornerback Rickey Dixon, and linebackers Leo Barker and Ed Brady. Brady also is an outstanding snapper on punts.

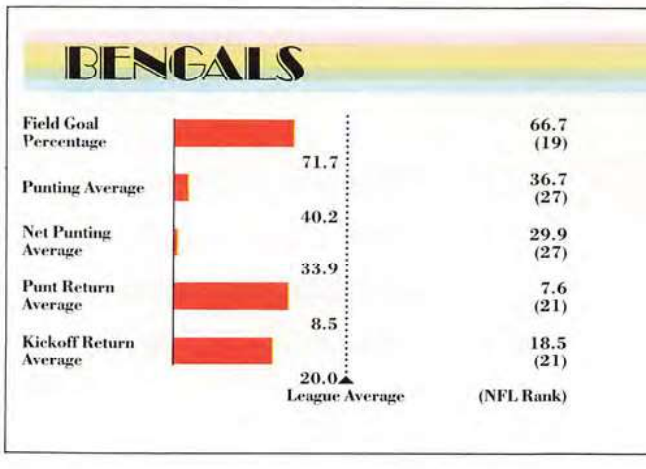
PUNTING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	Blk.
Johnson, Clev.-Cin.	31	1237	39.9	61	0
Johnson, Cin.	14	594	42.4	52	0
Fulhage	44	1672	38.0	53	2
Breech	3	64	21.3	30	0
Esiason	1	21	21.0	21	0

PUNT RETURNS	No.	FC	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Hillary	17	5	166	9.8	20	0
Brown	10	7	48	4.8	13	0
Martin	5	5	30	6.0	10	0

KICKOFF RETURNS	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Jennings	32	684	21.4	t98	1
Hillary	12	195	16.3	24	0
Bussey	7	83	11.9	22	0
Logan	4	80	20.0	24	0
Dixon	1	18	18.0	18	0
Brooks	1	-6	-6.0	-6	0

t-touchdown

FIELD GOALS	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Breech	1/1	5/5	3/4	2/5	0/1	11/16
Johnson, Cin.	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	1/2	1/2



49ERS Last year at this time, Mike Cofer was an unemployed placekicker looking for a team. San Francisco signed him as a free agent in the offseason, and all Cofer did was beat out 16-year veteran Ray Wersching and then lead the NFC in scoring.

Cofer scored 121 points on 40 of 41 extra points and 27 of 38 field goals to finish second in the NFL in scoring behind Buffalo's Scott Norwood. Cofer is very accurate inside 50 yards (he connected on 26 of 33 attempts), but he also has a strong enough leg to be a threat from farther out (he made a 52-yard effort against Washington in week 12).

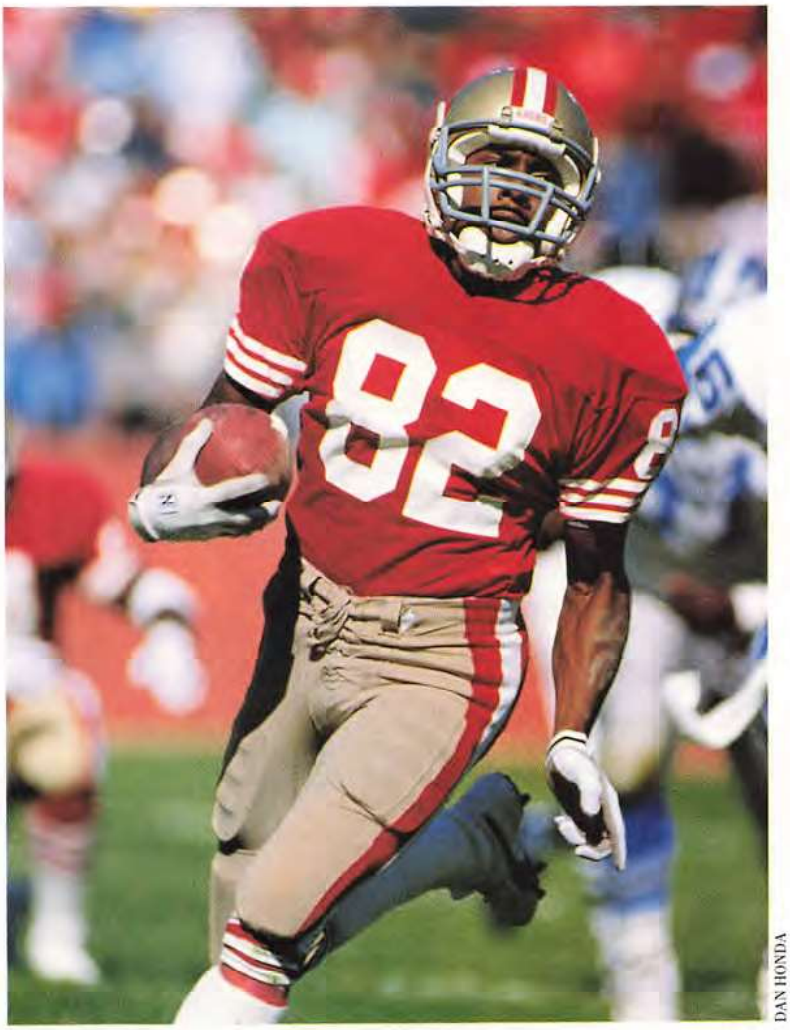
Cofer wasn't the only player to have an outstanding season on the 49ers' special teams. John Taylor led the NFL in punt-return average and was named to the NFC Pro Bowl squad as a kick returner. The elusive and super-quick Taylor, who averaged 12.6 yards per return in 1988, also brought back two punts for touchdowns (77 yards against Detroit in week 5 and 95 yards versus Washington in week 12). The latter was the longest in the NFL in 1988.

Taylor (18.8-yard average) shares the kickoff-return duties with Del Rodgers (16.3). Doug DuBose, who led the team in kickoff returns with a 19.0 average, was injured in December and is on the injured reserve list.

Rookie punter Barry Helton had an inconsistent first season, averaging only 39.3 yards on 78 punts. He has averaged just under that figure in San Francisco's two playoff games. Helton's regular-season net average of 32.2 ranked twenty-fourth in the NFL. Look for Cincinnati to put a lot of pressure on Helton to try to block one of his punts.

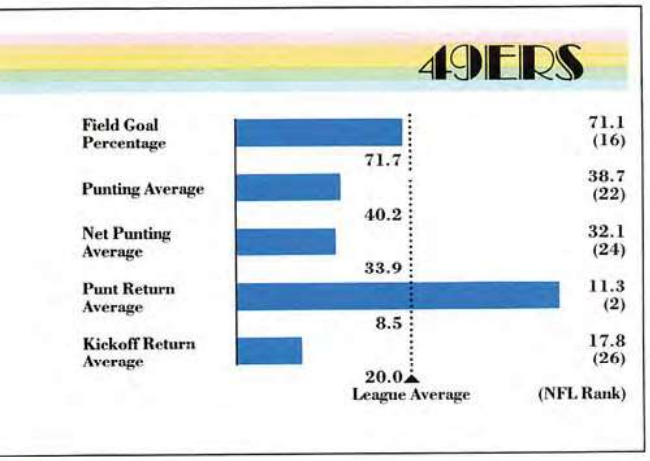
The kickoff-coverage unit had an outstanding year, giving up an average of 18.7 yards per return (sixth in the NFL). The punt coverage team wasn't as successful, however, allowing 9.1 yards per return to finish only seventeenth in the league.

Linebacker Sam Kennedy (24 special teams tackles in 1988), running back Harry Sydney (18), and safety Greg Cox (10) are players to watch on the coverage teams.



DAN HONDA

John Taylor, the NFC's Pro Bowl representative as a kick returner, struck fear into opposing special teams. He led the league in average (12.6), total yards (556), and touchdowns (2).



PUNTING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	Blk.
Helton	78	3069	39.3	53	1
Runager	1	24	24.0	24	0
PUNT RETURNS	**No.**	**FC**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**Long**	**TD**
Taylor	44	7	556	12.6	t95	2
Chandler	6	5	28	4.7	13	0
Griffin	4	3	28	7.0	10	0
t-touchdown						
KICKOFF RETURNS	**No.**	**Yds.**	**Avg.**	**Long**	**TD**
DuBose	32	608	19.0	44	0
Taylor	12	225	18.8	29	0
Rodgers	6	98	16.3	24	0
Craig	2	32	16.0	17	0
Sydney	1	8	8.0	8	0
Thomas	1	5	5.0	5	0
Wilson	1	2	2.0	2	0
FIELD GOALS	**1-19**	**20-29**	**30-39**	**40-49**	**50+**	**Total**
Cofer	1/1	9/10	9/11	7/11	1/5	27/38

BENGALS

HOW THEY WERE BUILT

YEAR	DRAFT (37)	TRADE (2)	FREE AGENTS (8)
1976 10-4 2nd, AFC Central	LB Reggie Williams (3B)		
1977 8-6 2nd, AFC Central	DE Eddie Edwards (1)		
1978 4-12 4th, AFC Central			
1979 4-12 4th, AFC Central	G Max Montoya (7)		
1980 6-10 4th, AFC Central	T Anthony Muñoz (1)		K Jim Breech
1981 14-5 AFC Champions	WR Cris Collinsworth (2)		
1982 7-3 3rd, AFC Regular Season	TE Rodney Holman (3)		
1983 7-9 3rd, AFC Central	CB Ray Horton (2) RB Stanley Wilson (9) NT Tim Krumrie (10)		
1984 8-8 2nd, AFC Central	T Brian Blados (1C) QB Boomer Esiason (2) RB Stanford Jennings (3) S Barney Bussey (5) LB Leo Barker (7) G Bruce Reimers (8) C Bruce Kozerski (9)	RB James Brooks (from San Diego)	
1985 7-9 2nd, AFC Central	WR Eddie Brown (1A) LB Emanuel King (1B) LB Carl Zander (2)		
1986 10-6 2nd, AFC Central	LB Joe Kelly (1A) WR Tim McGee (1B) CB Lewis Billups (2) DE Jim Skow (3A) S David Fulcher (3C) LB Leon White (5) T David Douglas (8)	LB Ed Brady (from L. A. Rams)	WR Ira Hillary
1987 4-11 4th, AFC Central	DE Jason Buck (1) CB Eric Thomas (2) DE Skip McClendon (3B) TE Jim Riggs (4) RB Marc Logan (5) S Solomon Wilcots (8)		QB Mike Norseth QB Turk Schonert CB Daryl Smith
1988 14-4 AFC Champions	CB Rickey Dixon (1) RB Ickey Woods (2) NT David Grant (4) DE Curtis Maxey (8) WR Carl Parker (12)		P Lee Johnson T Dave Smith T Jim Rourke

V.P., General Manager Paul Brown

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Bruce Coslet ..... Assistant Coach
Bill Johnson ..... Assistant Coach
Dick LeBeau ..... Assistant Coach
Jim McNally ..... Assistant Coach
Dick Selcer ..... Assistant Coach
Mike Stock ..... Assistant Coach
Bill Urbanik ..... Assistant Coach
Kim Wood ..... Assistant Coach

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Paul Kelly ..... Ticket Manager
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Dr. Walter Timperman ..... Team Physician
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Tom Gray ..... Equipment Manager
Al Davis ..... Video Director
Dave Slyby ..... Video Assistant
Shirley Bird ..... Entertainment Director
Don McMillan ..... Statistician
Howard Whitson ..... Security
Tom Kinder ..... Public Address Announcer
Justine Colville ..... Secretary
Teri Massa ..... Secretary
JoAnn Meyer ..... Secretary
Sandy Schick ..... Secretary
Ingrid Studley ..... Secretary
Jan Sutton ..... Secretary

Owner, President Edward DeBartolo, Jr.

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Dennis Green ..... Assistant Coach
Tommy Hart ..... Assistant Coach
Mike Holmgren ..... Assistant Coach
Sherman Lewis ..... Assistant Coach
Bobb McKittrick ..... Assistant Coach
Bill McPherson ..... Assistant Coach
Ray Rhodes ..... Assistant Coach
George Seifert ..... Assistant Coach
Lynn Stiles ..... Assistant Coach
Fred vonAppen ..... Assistant Coach

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Mrs. Victor P. Morabito ..... Limited Partner
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Carmen Policy ..... Vice President-General Counsel
Allan Webb ..... Director of Pro Personnel
Tony Razzano ..... Director of College Scouting
Neal Dahlen ..... Coordinator of Football Operations
Ken Dargel ..... Ticket Manager
Murlan Fowell ..... Luxury Box Manager
Keith Simon ..... Business Manager
Melrene Frear ..... Controller
Norb Hecker ..... Executive Administrative Assistant
Jerry Walker ..... Director of Public Relations
Rodney Knox ..... Publications Coordinator
Laurie Welling ..... Marketing/Promotions Coordinator
Dave Rahn ..... Public Relations Assistant
Shelley Wollman ..... Public Relations Assistant
R.C. Owens ..... Executive Assistant
Ed Alvarez ..... Legal Counsel
John Ottoboni ..... Legal Counsel
Bill Atkins ..... Scout
Jim Gruden ..... Scout
Ernie Plank ..... Scout
Neil Schmidt ..... Scout
Bob Whitman ..... Scout
Bill Wilson ..... Scout
Lindsy McLean ..... Trainer
Fred Tedeschi ..... Assistant Trainer
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James B. Klint, M.D. ..... Physician
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Ted Walsh ..... Equipment Assistant
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Robert Yanagi ..... Video Operations Coordinator
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Nicole Langerak ..... Secretary-Head Coach
Angi Repetto ..... Secretary-Coaches
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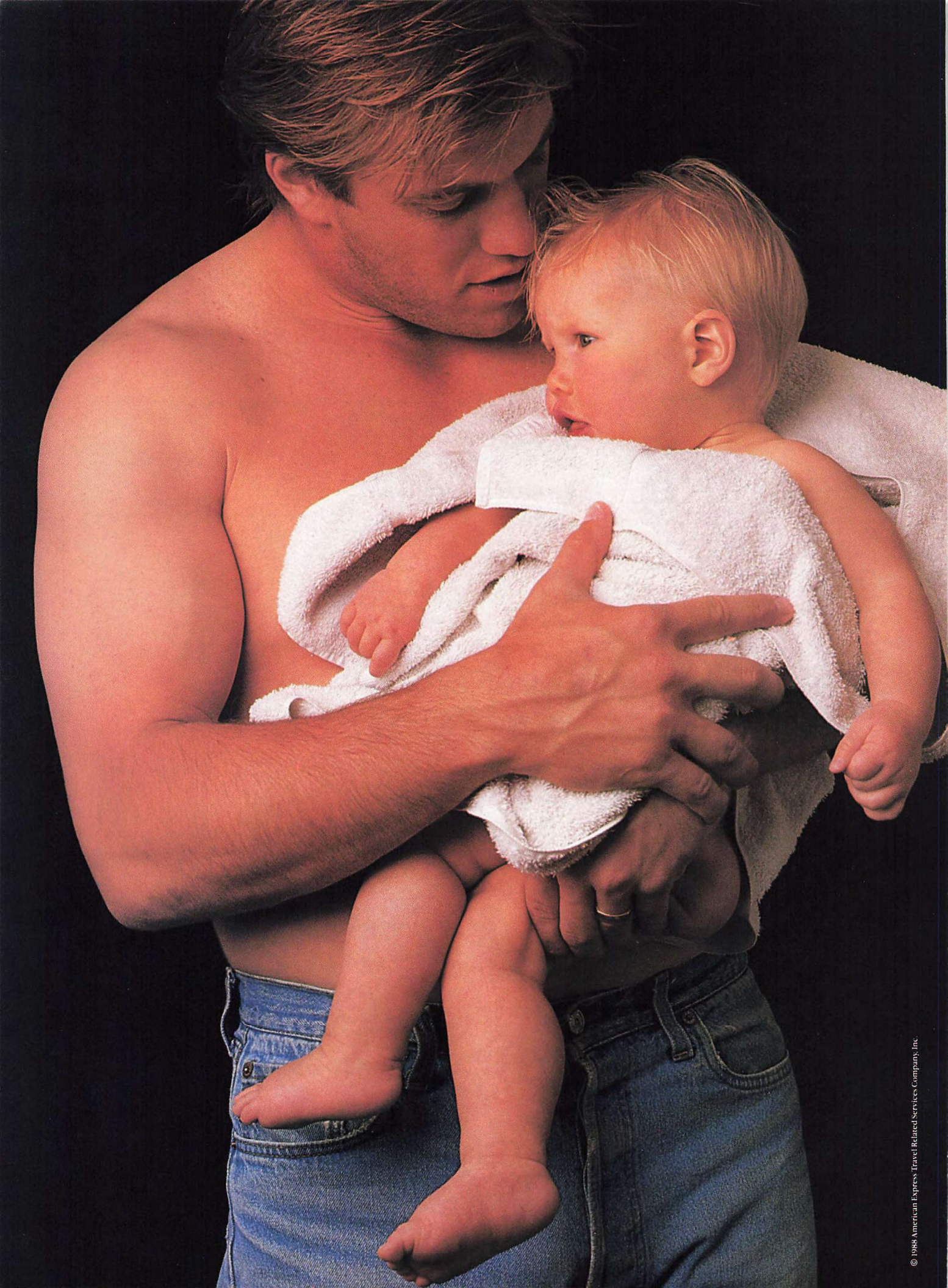
Winnie Newberg ..... Business Office
Tina Slagle ..... Business Office
Rick Morabito ..... Ticket Office
Carri Parham ..... Receptionist
Linda Saunders ..... Receptionist

HOW THEY WERE BUILT

YEAR	DRAFT (31)	TRADE (2)	FREE AGENTS (14)
1976 8-6 2nd, NFC West	C Randy Cross (2A)		
1977 5-9 3rd, NFC West			
1978 2-14 4th, NFC West			
1979 2-14 4th, NFC West	QB Joe Montana (3)		
1980 6-10 3rd, NFC West	LB Keena Turner (2)		
1981 16-3 Super Bowl XVI Champions	S Ronnie Lott (1) CB Eric Wright (2B) DE Pete Kugler (2)		WR Mike Wilson
1982 3-6 11th, NFC Regular Season	T Bubba Paris (2)		
1983 11-7 1st, NFC West	RB Roger Craig (2) S Tom Holmoe (4) LB Riki Ellison (5) G Jesse Sapolu (11)		
1984 18-1 Super Bowl XIX Champions	TE John Frank (2) G Guy McIntyre (3) NT Michael Carter (5A) S Jeff Fuller (5B)		LB Michael Walter
1985 10-7 2nd, NFC West	WR Jerry Rice (1) G-T Bruce Collie (5)	CB Tory Nixon (from Washington)	
1986 10-6-1 1st, NFC West	DE Larry Roberts (2) RB Tom Rathman (3A) CB Tim McKyer (3B) WR John Taylor (3C) LB-DE Charles Haley (4A) T Steve Wallace (4B) DE Kevin Fagan (4C) CB Don Griffin (6)		TE Ron Heller
1987 13-3 1st, NFC West	T Harris Barton (1A) RB Terrence Flagler (1B)	QB Steve Young (from Tampa Bay)	RB Harry Sydney RB Del Rodgers LB Ron Hadley LB Jim Fahnhorst C Chuck Thomas WR Terry Greer TE Brent Jones
1988 12-6 NFC Champions	DE Daniel Stubbs (2A) NT Pierce Holt (2B) LB Bill Romanowski (3) P Barry Helton (4)		K Mike Cofer CB Darryl Pollard S Greg Cox LB Sam Kennedy



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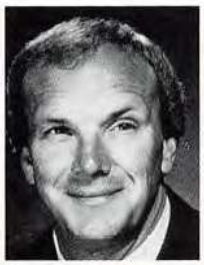
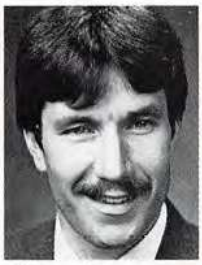

Sam Wyche
Head Coach


Bill Connelly
Business Manager

Al Heim
Dir. Public Relations

Pete Brown
Dir. Player Personnel

Paul Kelly
Ticket Manager

3 Jim Breech
Kicker

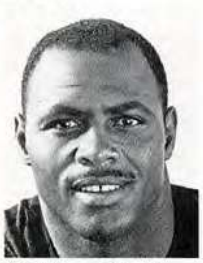
7 Boomer Esiason
Quarterback

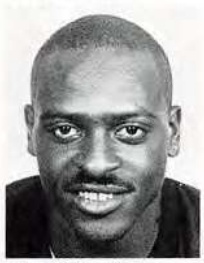
11 Lee Johnson
Punter

12 Mike Norseth
Quarterback

15 Turk Schonert
Quarterback

20 Ray Horton
Cornerback

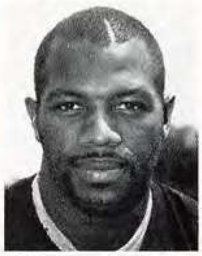

21 James Brooks
Running Back


22 Eric Thomas
Cornerback

23 Marc Logan
Running Back

24 Lewis Billups
Cornerback

25 Daryl Smith
Cornerback


27 Barney Bussey
Safety

29 Rickey Dixon
Cornerback

30 Ickey Woods
Running Back

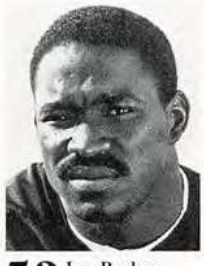
32 Stanley Wilson
Running Back

33 David Fulcher
Safety

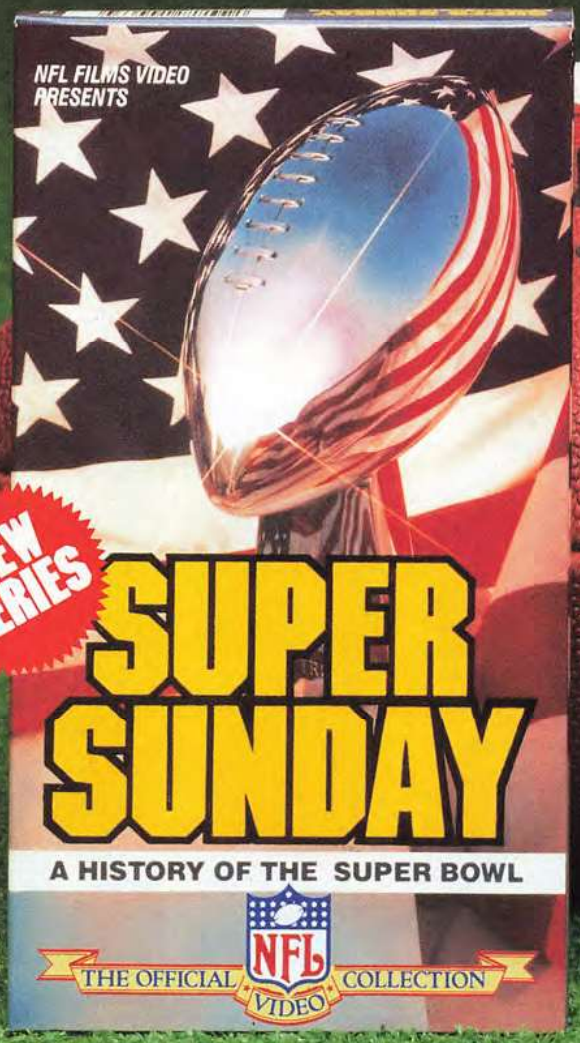
36 S. Jennings
Running Back

41 Solomon Wilcots
Safety

51 Leon White
Linebacker


53 Leo Barker
Linebacker

55 Ed Brady
Linebacker



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Card # _____ Exp. date _____

Signature _____

☐ Bill me later GBAAG5

Name _____ (please print)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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57 Reggie Williams
Linebacker

58 Joe Kelly
Linebacker

60 Dave Smith
Tackle

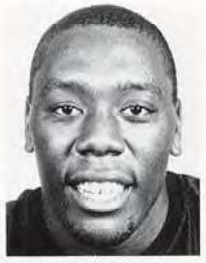
64 Bruce Kozerski
Center

65 Max Montoya
Guard

67 David Douglas
Tackle

69 Tim Krumrie
Nose Tackle

70 Jim Skow
Defensive End



72 S. McClendon
Defensive End

73 Eddie Edwards
Defensive End

74 Brian Blados
Tackle

75 Bruce Reimers
Guard

77 Jim Rourke
Tackle

78 Anthony Muñoz
Tackle

80 C. Collinsworth
Wide Receiver

81 Eddie Brown
Wide Receiver

82 Rodney Holman
Tight End

85 Tim McGee
Wide Receiver

86 Carl Parker
Wide Receiver

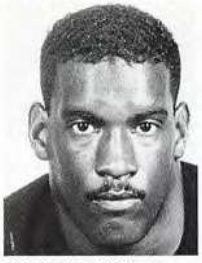
87 Jim Riggs
Tight End

89 Ira Hillary
Wide Receiver

90 Emanuel King
Linebacker

91 Carl Zander
Linebacker

96 Curtis Maxey
Defensive End



98 David Grant
Nose Tackle

99 Jason Buck
Defensive End

Jim Anderson
Assistant Coach

Bruce Coslet
Assistant Coach

Bill Johnson
Assistant Coach

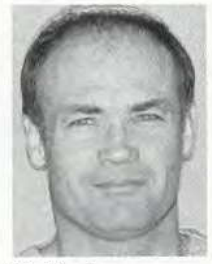
Dick LeBeau
Assistant Coach

Jim McNally
Assistant Coach

Dick Selcer
Assistant Coach

Mike Stock
Assistant Coach

Bill Urbanik
Assistant Coach



Kim Wood
Assistant Coach

Marvin Pollins
Trainer

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Ordinarily, we wouldn't make such a bold prediction. But then, the 1989 Oldsmobile® Cutlass Supreme is anything but ordinary.

It is the product of five years of engineering and design, over a million miles of testing. In the purest sense of the word, the Cutlass Supreme is a totally new Oldsmobile.

Just take a look at it. The sleek lines. The smooth shape. Styling destined to become the standard of a new generation.

But advanced styling isn't the only reason the Cutlass Supreme is ahead of its time. Front-wheel drive, four-wheel independent suspension, power-assisted rack-and-pinion steering and a 2.8-liter fuel-injected V6 assure it will stay ahead for years down the road.

In the meantime, it gives the younger generation something to look forward to.

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The New Generation of OLDSMOBILE

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BENGALS

ALPHABETICAL ROSTER

No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	NFL Exp.	College
53	Barker, Leo	LB	6-2	227	11/7/59	5	New Mexico State
24	Billups, Lewis	CB	5-11	190	10/10/63	3	North Alabama
74	Blados, Brian	T	6-5	295	1/11/62	5	North Carolina
55	Brady, Ed	LB	6-2	235	6/17/60	5	Illinois
3	Breech, Jim	K	5-6	161	4/11/56	10	California
21	Brooks, James	RB	5-10	182	12/28/58	8	Auburn
81	Brown, Eddie	WR	6-0	185	12/17/62	4	Miami
99	Buck, Jason	DE	6-5	264	7/27/63	2	BYU
27	Bussey, Barney	S	6-0	195	5/20/62	3	South Carolina
80	Collinsworth, Cris	WR	6-5	192	1/27/59	8	Florida
29	Dixon, Rickey	CB	5-11	181	12/26/66	R	Oklahoma
67	Douglas, David	T	6-4	280	3/20/63	3	Tennessee
73	Edwards, Eddie	DE	6-5	256	4/25/54	12	Miami
7	Esiason, Boomer	QB	6-5	225	4/17/61	5	Maryland
33	Fulcher, David	S	6-3	228	9/28/64	3	Arizona State
98	Grant, David	NT	6-4	277	9/17/65	R	West Virginia
89	Hillary, Ira	WR	5-11	190	11/13/62	2	South Carolina
82	Holman, Rodney	TE	6-3	238	4/20/60	7	Tulane
20	Horton, Ray	CB	5-11	190	4/12/60	6	Washington
36	Jennings, Stanford	RB	6-1	205	3/12/62	5	Furman
11	Johnson, Lee	P	6-2	198	11/27/61	4	BYU
58	Kelly, Joe	LB	6-2	231	12/11/64	3	Washington
90	King, Emanuel	LB	6-4	251	8/15/63	4	Alabama
64	Kozerski, Bruce	C	6-4	275	4/2/62	5	Holy Cross
69	Krumrie, Tim	NT	6-2	268	5/20/60	6	Wisconsin
23	Logan, Marc	RB	5-11	207	5/9/65	2	Kentucky
96	Maxey, Curtis	DE	6-3	298	6/28/65	R	Grambling
72	McClendon, Skip	DE	6-7	275	4/9/64	2	Arizona State
85	McGee, Tim	WR	5-10	175	8/7/64	3	Tennessee
65	Montoya, Max	G	6-5	275	5/12/56	10	UCLA
78	Muñoz, Anthony	T	6-6	278	8/19/58	9	USC
12	Norseth, Mike	QB	6-2	200	8/22/64	2	Kansas
86	Parker, Carl	WR	6-2	201	2/5/65	R	Vanderbilt
75	Reimers, Bruce	G	6-7	280	9/18/60	5	Iowa State
87	Riggs, Jim	TE	6-5	245	9/29/63	2	Clemson
77	Rourke, Jim	T	6-5	275	2/10/57	8	Boston College
15	Schonert, Turk	QB	6-1	196	1/15/57	9	Stanford
70	Skow, Jim	DE	6-3	255	6/29/63	3	Nebraska
25	Smith, Daryl	CB	5-10	188	5/8/63	2	North Alabama
60	Smith, Dave	T	6-7	290	12/12/64	R	Southern Illinois
22	Thomas, Eric	CB	5-11	181	9/11/64	2	Tulane
51	White, Leon	LB	6-3	245	10/4/63	3	BYU
41	Wilcots, Solomon	S	5-11	185	10/9/64	2	Colorado
57	Williams, Reggie	LB	6-1	232	9/19/54	13	Dartmouth
32	Wilson, Stanley	RB	6-1	212	8/23/61	4	Oklahoma
30	Woods, Ickey	RB	6-2	232	2/28/66	R	Nevada-Las Vegas
91	Zander, Carl	LB	6-2	235	3/23/63	4	Tennessee

R—A first-year player who has not previously been in an NFL training camp.

THREE-DEEP LINEUPS

OFFENSE			
WR	**—85 Tim McGee**	80 Cris Collinsworth	89 Ira Hillary
LT	**—78 Anthony Muñoz**	60 Dave Smith	
LG	**—75 Bruce Reimers**	74 Brian Blados	
C	**—64 Bruce Kozerski**	74 Brian Blados	67 David Douglas
RG	**—65 Max Montoya**	67 David Douglas	77 Jim Rourke
RT	**—74 Brian Blados**	60 Dave Smith	
TE	**—82 Rodney Holman**	87 Jim Riggs	
WR	**—81 Eddie Brown**	89 Ira Hillary	86 Carl Parker
QB	**— 7 Boomer Esiason**	15 Turk Schonert	12 Mike Norseth
RB	**—21 James Brooks**	36 Stanford Jennings	23 Marc Logan
RB	**—30 Ickey Woods**	32 Stanley Wilson	
DEFENSE			
LE	**—72 Skip McClendon**	73 Eddie Edwards	
NT	**—69 Tim Krumrie**	98 David Grant	96 Curtis Maxey
RE	**—70 Jim Skow**	99 Jason Buck	
LOLB	**—51 Leon White**	90 Emanuel King	
LILB	**—91 Carl Zander**	55 Ed Brady	
RILB	**—58 Joe Kelly**	53 Leo Barker	
ROLB	**—57 Reggie Williams**	90 Emanuel King	
LCB	**—24 Lewis Billups**	29 Rickey Dixon	25 Daryl Smith
RCB	**—22 Eric Thomas**	29 Rickey Dixon	25 Daryl Smith
SS	**—33 David Fulcher**	27 Barney Bussey	
FS	**—41 Solomon Wilcots**	29 Rickey Dixon	20 Ray Horton
SPECIALISTS			
P	**—11 Lee Johnson**		
K	**— 3 Jim Breech**	11 Lee Johnson	
H	**—15 Turk Schonert**		
PC	**—55 Ed Brady**	65 Max Montoya	64 Bruce Kozerski
KC	**—64 Bruce Kozerski**	65 Max Montoya	55 Ed Brady
PR	**—89 Ira Hillary**	81 Eddie Brown	
KR	**—36 Stanford Jennings**	89 Ira Hillary	

Bold Face—Starters

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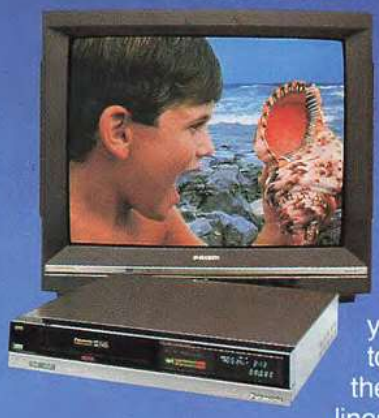

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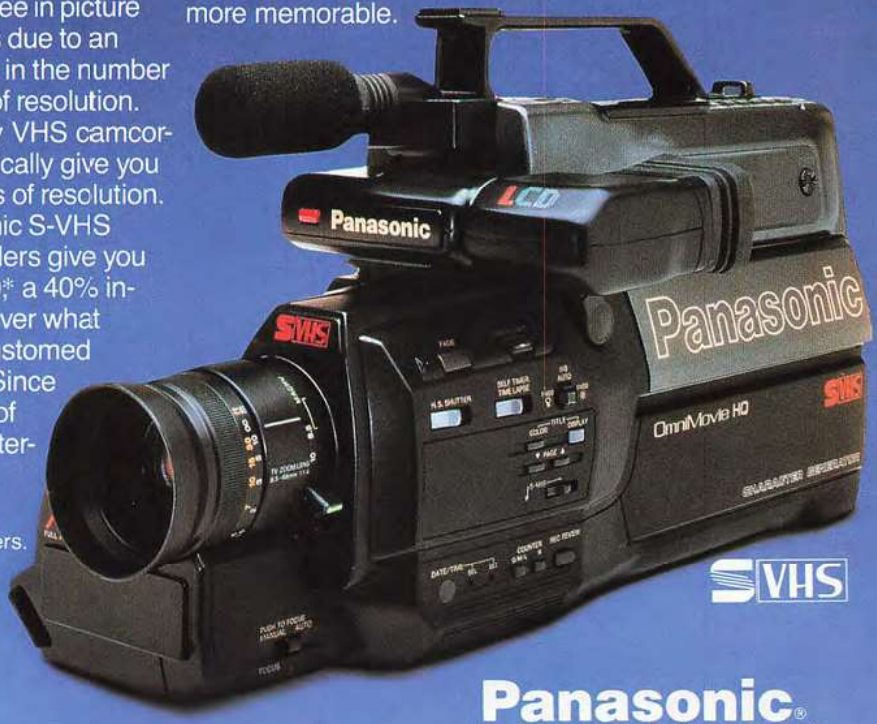

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28 Ways To Tackle

CINCINNATI BENGALS

OFFENSE

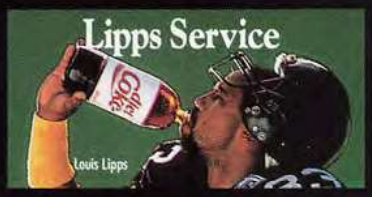
85	Tim McGee	WR
78	Anthony Muñoz	LT
75	Bruce Reimers	LG
64	Bruce Kozerski	C
65	Max Montoya	RG
74	Brian Blados	RT
82	Rodney Holman	TE
81	Eddie Brown	WR
7	Boomer Esiason	QB
30	Ickey Woods	RB
21	James Brooks	RB

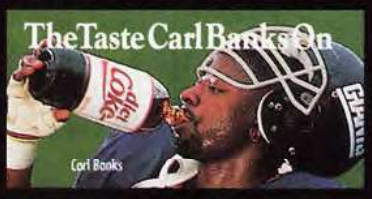
DEFENSE

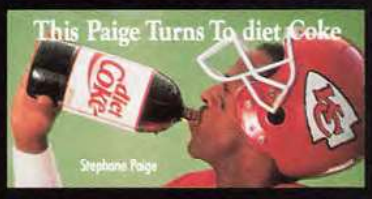
72	Skip McClendon	LE
69	Tim Krumrie	NT
70	Jim Skow	RE
51	Leon White	LOLB
91	Carl Zander	LILB
58	Joe Kelly	RILB
57	Reggie Williams	ROLB
24	Lewis Billups	LCB
22	Eric Thomas	RCB
33	David Fulcher	SS
41	Solomon Wilcots	FS

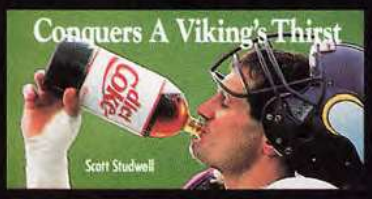
BENGALS NUMERICAL ROSTER

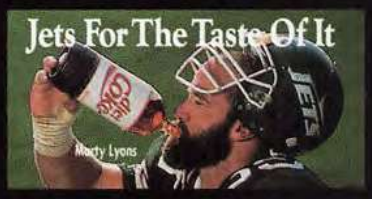
3	Jim Breech	K	64	Bruce Kozerski	C
7	Boomer Esiason	QB	65	Max Montoya	G
11	Lee Johnson	P	67	David Douglas	T
12	Mike Norseth	QB	69	Tim Krumrie	NT
15	Turk Schonert	QB	70	Jim Skow	DE
20	Ray Horton	CB	72	Skip McClendon	DE
21	James Brooks	RB	73	Eddie Edwards	DE
22	Eric Thomas	CB	74	Brian Blados	T
23	Marc Logan	RB	75	Bruce Reimers	G
24	Lewis Billups	CB	77	Jim Rourke	T
25	Daryl Smith	CB	78	Anthony Muñoz	T
27	Barney Bussey	S	80	Cris Collinsworth	WR
29	Rickey Dixon	CB	81	Eddie Brown	WR
30	Ickey Woods	RB	82	Rodney Holman	TE
32	Stanley Wilson	RB	85	Tim McGee	WR
33	David Fulcher	S	86	Carl Parker	WR
36	Stanford Jennings	RB	87	Jim Riggs	TE
41	Solomon Wilcots	S	89	Ira Hillary	WR
51	Leon White	LB	90	Emanuel King	LB
53	Leo Barker	LB	91	Carl Zander	LB
55	Ed Brady	LB	96	Curtis Maxey	DE
57	Reggie Williams	LB	98	David Grant	NT
58	Joe Kelly	LB	99	Jason Buck	DE
60	Dave Smith	T			

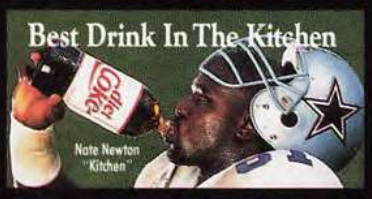












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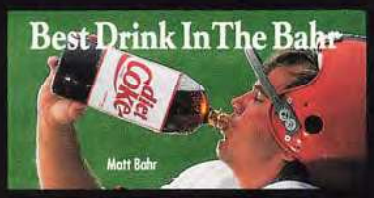

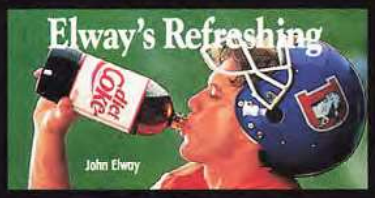

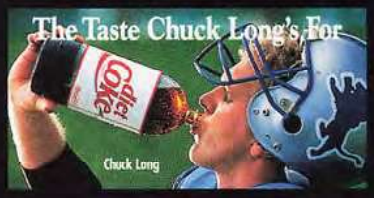

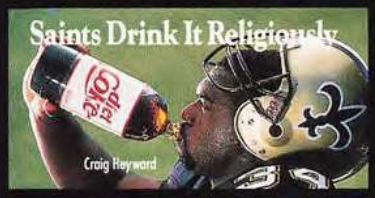

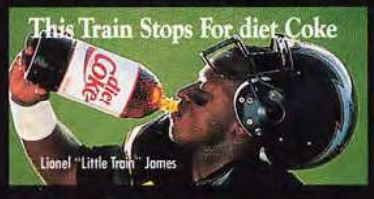

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SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

OFFENSE

82	John Taylor	WR
74	Steve Wallace	LT
61	Jesse Sapolu	LG
51	Randy Cross	C
62	Guy McIntyre	RG
79	Harris Barton	RT
86	John Frank	TE
80	Jerry Rice	WR
16	Joe Montana	QB
44	Tom Rathman	RB
33	Roger Craig	RB

DEFENSE

91	Larry Roberts	LE
95	Michael Carter	NT
75	Kevin Fagan	RE
94	Charles Haley	LOLB
55	Jim Fahnhorst	LILB
99	Michael Walter	RILB
58	Keena Turner	ROLB
22	Tim McKyer	LCB
29	Don Griffin	RCB
49	Jeff Fuller	SS
42	Ronnie Lott	FS

49ERS NUMERICAL ROSTER

6	Mike Cofer	K	57	Sam Kennedy	LB
8	Steve Young	QB	60	Chuck Thomas	C
9	Barry Helton	P	61	Jesse Sapolu	G
16	Joe Montana	QB	62	Guy McIntyre	G
20	Tory Nixon	CB	67	Pete Kugler	DE
21	Eric Wright	CB	69	Bruce Collie	G-T
22	Tim McKyer	CB	74	Steve Wallace	T
24	Harry Sydney	RB	75	Kevin Fagan	DE
26	Darryl Pollard	CB	77	Bubba Paris	T
29	Don Griffin	CB	78	Pierce Holt	NT
32	Terrence Flagler	RB	79	Harris Barton	T
33	Roger Craig	RB	80	Jerry Rice	WR
35	Del Rodgers	RB	82	John Taylor	WR
38	Greg Cox	S	83	Terry Greer	WR
42	Ronnie Lott	S	84	Brent Jones	TE
44	Tom Rathman	RB	85	Mike Wilson	WR
46	Tom Holmoe	S	86	John Frank	TE
49	Jeff Fuller	S	89	Ron Heller	TE
50	Riki Ellison	LB	91	Larry Roberts	DE
51	Randy Cross	C	94	Charles Haley	LB-DE
53	Bill Romanowski	LB	95	Michael Carter	NT
54	Ron Hadley	LB	96	Daniel Stubbs	DE
55	Jim Fahnhorst	LB	99	Michael Walter	LB

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49ERS

ALPHABETICAL ROSTER

No.	Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Birthdate	NFL Exp.	College
79	Barton, Harris	T	6-4	280	4/19/64	2	North Carolina
95	Carter, Michael	NT	6-2	285	10/29/60	5	SMU
6	Cofer, Mike	K	6-1	190	2/19/64	1	North Carolina State
69	Collie, Bruce	G-T	6-6	275	6/27/62	4	Texas-Arlington
38	Cox, Greg	S	6-0	223	1/6/65	R	San Jose State
33	Craig, Roger	RB	6-0	224	7/10/60	6	Nebraska
51	Cross, Randy	C	6-3	265	4/25/54	13	UCLA
50	Ellison, Riki	LB	6-2	225	8/15/60	6	USC
75	Fagan, Kevin	DE	6-4	265	4/25/63	2	Miami
55	Fahnhorst, Jim	LB	6-4	230	11/8/58	5	Minnesota
32	Flagler, Terrence	RB	6-0	200	9/24/64	2	Clemson
86	Frank, John	TE	6-3	225	4/17/62	5	Ohio State
49	Fuller, Jeff	S	6-2	216	8/8/62	5	Texas A&M
83	Greer, Terry	WR	6-1	192	9/27/57	3	Alabama State
29	Griffin, Don	CB	6-0	176	3/17/64	3	Middle Tennessee State
54	Hadley, Ron	LB	6-2	240	11/9/63	2	Washington
94	Haley, Charles	LB-DE	6-5	230	1/6/64	3	James Madison
89	Heller, Ron	TE	6-3	235	9/18/63	2	Oregon State
9	Helton, Barry	P	6-3	205	1/2/65	R	Colorado
46	Holmoe, Tom	S	6-2	195	3/7/60	5	BYU
78	Holt, Pierce	NT	6-4	280	1/1/62	R	Angelo State
84	Jones, Brent	TE	6-4	230	2/12/63	2	Santa Clara
57	Kennedy, Sam	LB	6-3	235	7/10/64	1	San Jose State
67	Kugler, Pete	DE	6-4	255	8/9/59	6	Penn State
42	Lott, Ronnie	S	6-0	200	5/8/59	8	USC
62	McIntyre, Guy	G	6-3	265	2/17/61	5	Georgia
22	McKyer, Tim	CB	6-0	174	9/5/63	3	Texas-Arlington
16	Montana, Joe	QB	6-2	195	6/11/56	10	Notre Dame
20	Nixon, Tory	CB	5-11	186	2/24/62	4	San Diego State
77	Paris, Bubba	T	6-6	306	10/6/60	6	Michigan
26	Pollard, Darryl	CB	5-11	187	5/11/65	2	Weber State
44	Rathman, Tom	RB	6-1	232	10/7/62	3	Nebraska
80	Rice, Jerry	WR	6-2	200	10/13/62	4	Mississippi Valley State
91	Roberts, Larry	DE	6-3	275	6/2/63	3	Alabama
35	Rodgers, Del	RB	5-10	203	6/22/60	4	Utah
53	Romanowski, Bill	LB	6-4	231	4/2/66	R	Boston College
61	Sapolu, Jesse	G	6-4	260	3/10/61	3	Hawaii
96	Stubbs, Daniel	DE	6-4	260	1/3/65	R	Miami
24	Sydney, Harry	RB	6-0	217	6/26/59	2	Kansas
82	Taylor, John	WR	6-1	185	3/31/62	2	Delaware State
60	Thomas, Chuck	C	6-3	280	12/24/60	3	Oklahoma
58	Turner, Keena	LB	6-2	222	10/22/58	9	Purdue
74	Wallace, Steve	T	6-5	276	12/27/64	3	Auburn
99	Walter, Michael	LB	6-3	238	11/30/60	6	Oregon
85	Wilson, Mike	WR	6-3	215	12/19/58	8	Washington State
21	Wright, Eric	CB	6-1	185	4/18/59	7	Missouri
8	Young, Steve	QB	6-2	200	10/11/61	4	BYU

R—A first-year player who has not previously been in an NFL training camp.

THREE-DEEP LINEUPS

OFFENSE			
WR	**—82 John Taylor**	85 Mike Wilson	
LT	**—74 Steve Wallace**	77 Bubba Paris	
LG	**—61 Jesse Sapolu**	69 Bruce Collie	
C	**—51 Randy Cross**	60 Chuck Thomas	
RG	**—62 Guy McIntyre**	69 Bruce Collie	
RT	**—79 Harris Barton**	77 Bubba Paris	
TE	**—86 John Frank**	89 Ron Heller	84 Brent Jones
WR	**—80 Jerry Rice**	83 Terry Greer	
QB	**—16 Joe Montana**	8 Steve Young	
RB	**—33 Roger Craig**	32 Terrence Flagler	35 Del Rodgers
RB	**—44 Tom Rathman**	24 Harry Sydney	
DEFENSE			
LE	**—91 Larry Roberts**	96 Daniel Stubbs	
NT	**—95 Michael Carter**	78 Pierce Holt	
RE	**—75 Kevin Fagan**	67 Pete Kugler	
LOLB	**—94 Charles Haley**	57 Sam Kennedy	
LILB	**—55 Jim Fahnhorst**	50 Riki Ellison	54 Ron Hadley
RILB	**—99 Michael Walter**	55 Jim Fahnhorst	54 Ron Hadley
ROLB	**—58 Keena Turner**	53 Bill Romanowski	57 Sam Kennedy
LCB	**—22 Tim McKyer**	20 Tory Nixon	26 Darryl Pollard
RCB	**—29 Don Griffin**	26 Darryl Pollard	21 Eric Wright
SS	**—49 Jeff Fuller**	38 Greg Cox	
FS	**—42 Ronnie Lott**	46 Tom Holmoe	
SPECIALISTS			
K	**— 6 Mike Cofer**		
P	**— 9 Barry Helton**		
H	**— 9 Barry Helton**	16 Joe Montana	8 Steve Young
PC	**—60 Chuck Thomas**	61 Jesse Sapolu	51 Randy Cross
KC	**—51 Randy Cross**	60 Chuck Thomas	61 Jesse Sapolu
PR	**—82 John Taylor**	29 Don Griffin	
KR	**—82 John Taylor**	33 Roger Craig	

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49ERS

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Edward J. DeBartolo, Jr.
Owner-President

Bill Walsh
Head Coach

6 Mike Cofer
Kicker

8 Steve Young
Quarterback

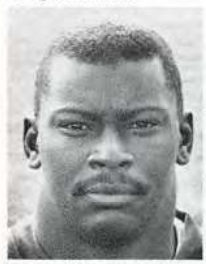
9 Barry Helton
Punter

16 Joe Montana
Quarterback

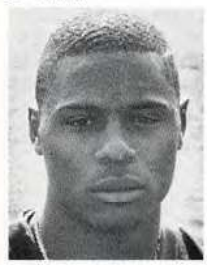
20 Tory Nixon
Cornerback

21 Eric Wright
Cornerback

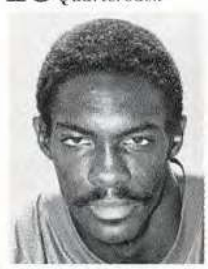
22 Tim McKyer
Cornerback



24 Harry Sydney
Running Back



26 Darryl Pollard
Cornerback



29 Don Griffin
Cornerback

32 T. Flagler
Running Back

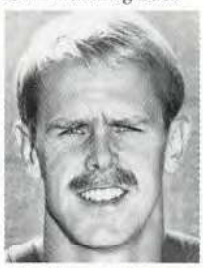
33 Roger Craig
Running Back

35 Del Rodgers
Running Back

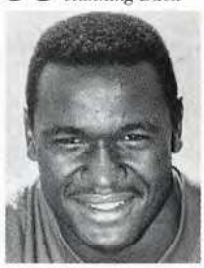
38 Greg Cox
Safety

42 Ronnie Lott
Safety

44 Tom Rathman
Running Back



46 Tom Holmoe
Safety



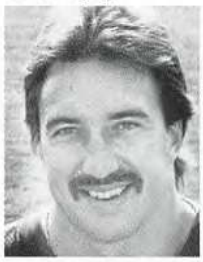
49 Jeff Fuller
Safety

50 Riki Ellison
Linebacker

51 Randy Cross
Center

53 B. Romanowski
Linebacker

54 Ron Hadley
Linebacker



55 Jim Fahnhorst
Linebacker

57 Sam Kennedy
Linebacker

58 Keena Turner
Linebacker

60 Chuck Thomas
Center

61 Jesse Sapolu
Guard

62 Guy McIntyre
Guard

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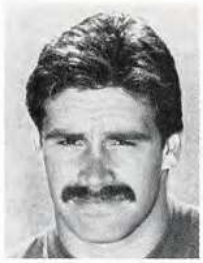
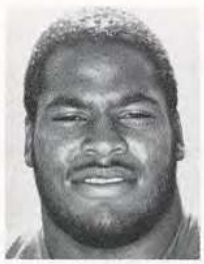


67 Pete Kugler
Defensive End

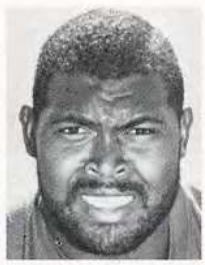
69 Bruce Collie
Guard-Tackle

72 Jeff Stover
Defensive End



74 Steve Wallace
Tackle

75 Kevin Fagan
Defensive End



77 Bubba Paris
Tackle

78 Pierce Holt
Nose Tackle

79 Harris Barton
Tackle

80 Jerry Rice
Wide Receiver

82 John Taylor
Wide Receiver

83 Terry Greer
Wide Receiver

84 Brent Jones
Tight End

85 Mike Wilson
Wide Receiver

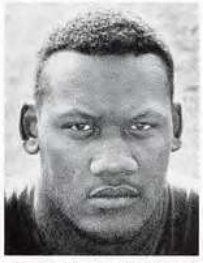
86 John Frank
Tight End

89 Ron Heller
Tight End

91 Larry Roberts
Defensive End

94 Charles Haley
Linebacker

95 Michael Carter
Nose Tackle



96 Daniel Stubbs
Defensive End

99 Michael Walter
Linebacker

Jerry Attaway
Assistant Coach

Dennis Green
Assistant Coach

Tommy Hart
Assistant Coach

Mike Holmgren
Assistant Coach

Sherman Lewis
Assistant Coach

Bobb McKittrick
Assistant Coach

Bill McPherson
Assistant Coach

Ray Rhodes
Assistant Coach

George Seifert
Assistant Coach

Lynn Stiles
Assistant Coach

Fred vonAppen
Assistant Coach

Lindsy McLean
Trainer

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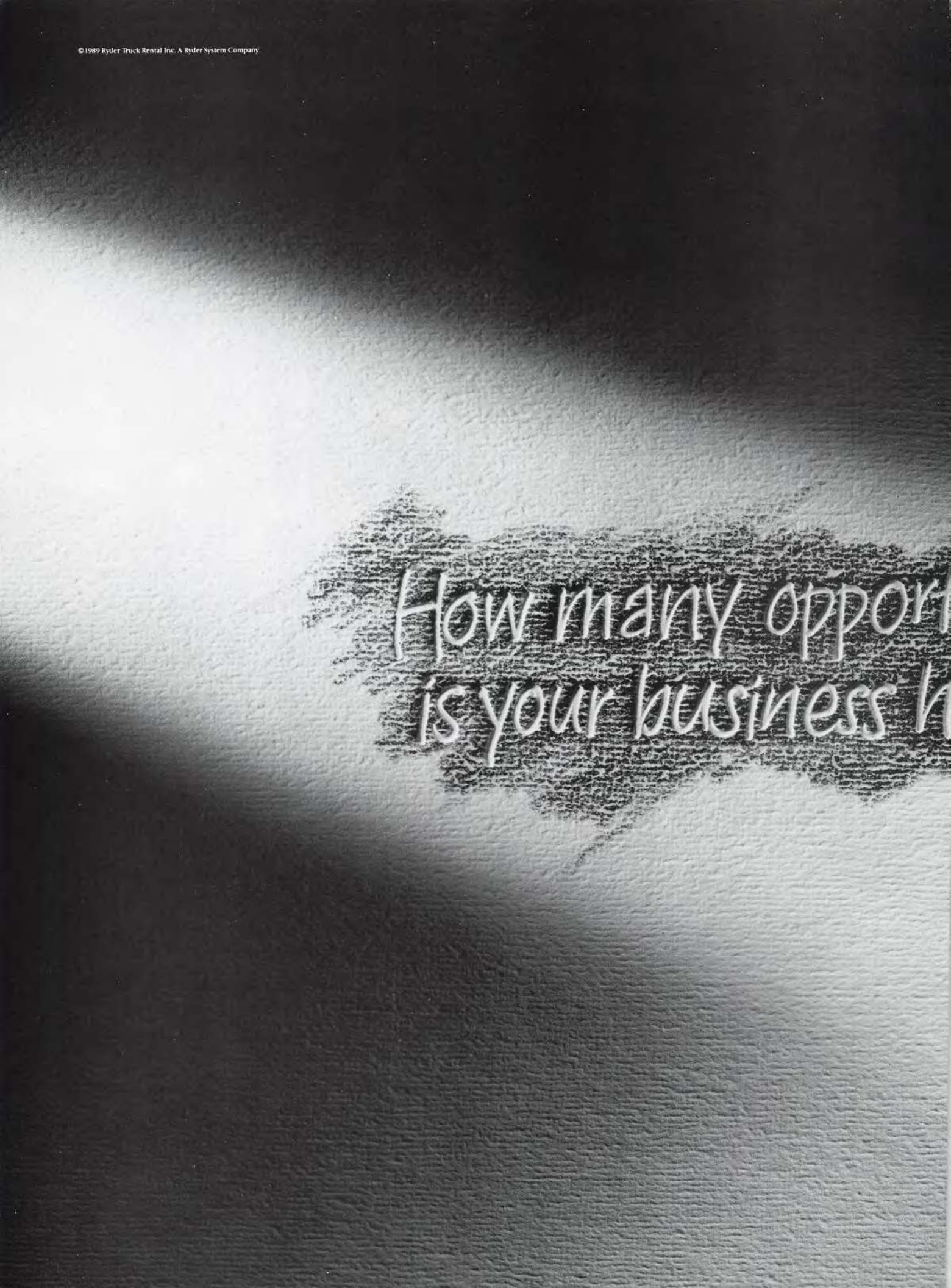

Before you dismiss the idea, just ask yourself a couple of questions. Would you like more capital? Less inventory? Lower costs? How about greater customer satisfaction?

Of course, you say, but you've looked at all those.

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HENRY GRETHEL

Super Bowl III:
Twentieth Anniversary of a Classic
By Shelby Strother

SPOTLIGHT

The Perfect Dolphins of 1972 Revisited
By Craig Dolch

"I Guarantee It"

It's Been 20 Years Since Joe Namath Spoke Those Words, 20 Years Since the Jets Delivered on His Promise

By Shelby Strother

Illustrations by F. Bruce Dean

The ones who don't wear their rings every day keep them somewhere safe. They take them out of the safe deposit box for formal affairs. Last summer there was a reunion, a golf outing and picnic in New York. Every one of the New York Jets who showed up brought his championship ring. There's just something striking about the large ring with the three glittering diamonds. It's special—more special, they say, than any other Super Bowl ring.

Maybe it's the two words engraved on it: Poise and Execution. It was the battle cry of head coach Weeb Ewbank in January, 1969.

Maybe the ring really *is* different, more Super, than the others. After all, it did come with a guarantee. . . .

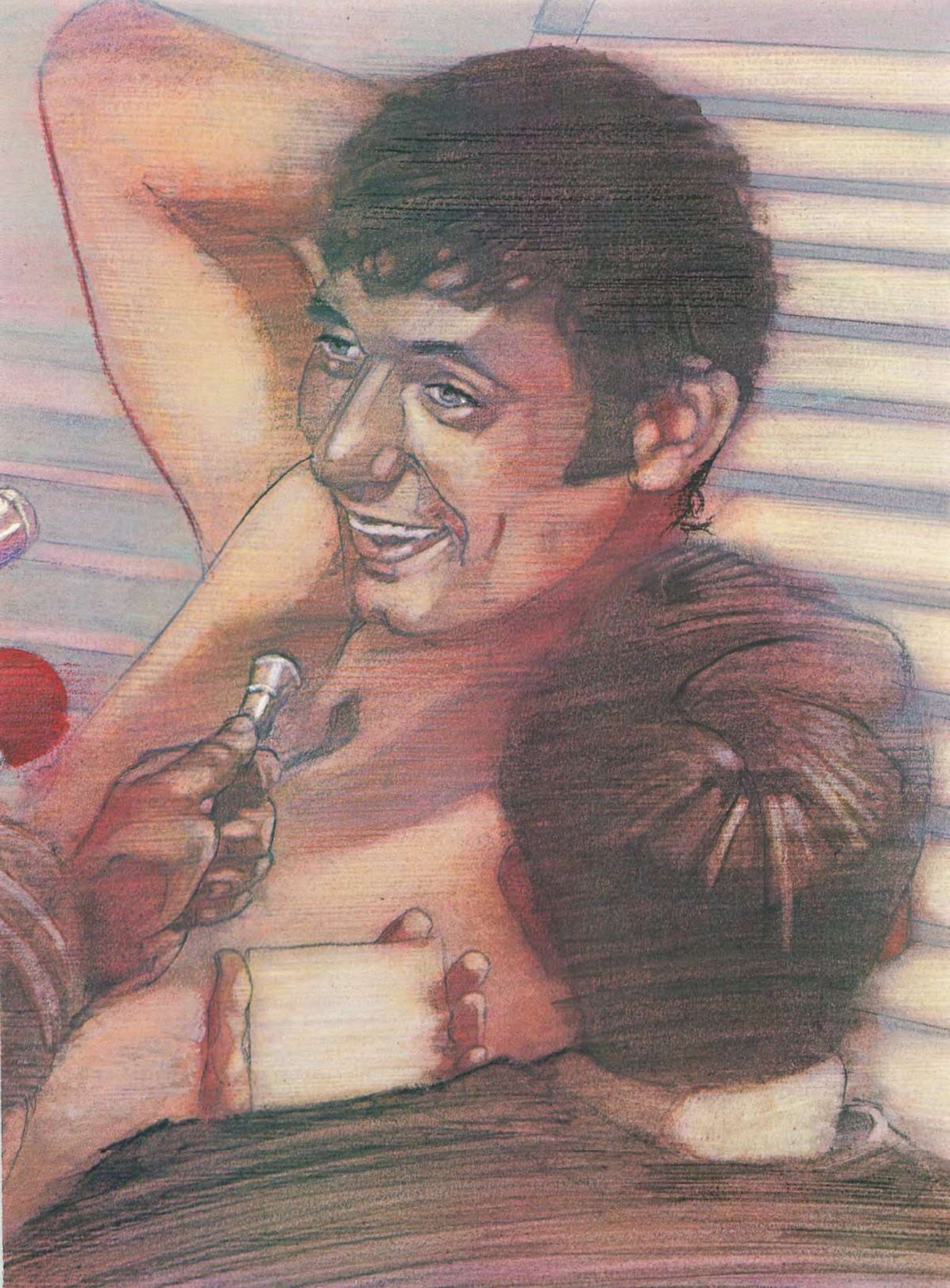
♦

In the first month of 1969, there was a notion that the Baltimore Colts might be the best team of all time. The championship showdown between the Colts of the National Football League and the Jets of the American Football League might turn into a ratings disaster for NBC. The twelfth of January might as well be the Twelfth of Never when it came to the New York Jets' chances at victory.

The Colts had compiled a 15-1 record. They had won 10 games in a row, including four by shutouts. In the NFL Championship Game, Baltimore had humbled the Cleveland Browns 34-0.

The Orange Bowl in Miami would be sold out.

Joe Namath, the brash young quarterback of the New York Jets, holds an impromptu press conference at poolside of the team's hotel prior to spurring the most improbable Super Bowl victory.



Some 75,000 people would be witness to a public mugging. Oddsmakers were posting some outrageous figures. The Colts were favored by as many as 18 points.

"Eighteen points?" Matt Snell said incredulously. "That's three touchdowns. That's ridiculous."

The Jets' fullback scowled. He already was angry at being snubbed in the voting for All-AFL honors. He didn't get a single vote.

♦

When Ewbank and his staff started breaking down films, they began to wonder.

"If we can't pass on these guys, we ought to get out of the business," Ewbank mumbled during one film session.

"The Colts show the safety blitz a lot," assistant Clive Rush said.

Walt Michaels, the whip-cracking defensive coach, said, "They tend to go to the tight end on third down."

It was the usual analysis pro football coaches do each week during the season, the usual pregame surgery. But more and more, Ewbank and his assistants noticed things that could not be classified as tendencies or formations.

"They don't have any breakaway runners," Michaels said. "That means we can play tighter on their receivers."

"Watch their secondary," Ewbank pointed out. "See how they always rotate toward their cornerback [Bobby] Boyd. I think they're trying to protect him. I think he's slow."

Ewbank watched Colts quarterback Earl Morrall throw a pass, then rewound and watched again. "He isn't blessed with a whip," Ewbank said. "He can't gun it like Lamonica. Or Namath."

The more the coaches watched, the more they felt as if they were guardians of a great secret.

"We can beat these guys," Ewbank said. "We're going to win this game."

Baltimore head coach Don Shula and his staff also were confident. The victory over the Browns was totally convincing. And the Colts had been overpowering teams for a couple of months. They had surrendered only six touchdowns in their last 10 games. They had the league's most valuable player in Morrall.

"When we studied film on the Jets," Shula said later, "we felt we'd be able to control both lines of scrimmage. Sure, we felt confident of victory. You don't think any other way before any game."

♦

The sharp contrast between the two teams was a perfect metaphor for the times. The sociological turmoil was everywhere in 1969. The Vietnam conflict had just been turned up a notch, thanks to something called the Tet Offensive. Astronauts had just returned from circling the moon (six months after the game, Neil Armstrong's left foot would touch the lunar surface). Richard Nixon was at work on his Inauguration Day speech.

In upper New York state, one Jets fan was making arrangements for his flight to Miami. Max Yasgur liked the Jets' style, their flashy arrogance and rebellious nature. Yasgur was coming down for the game. He already had his ticket. It would be his last flight of fancy for a while. Soon as he got back, he'd meet with the folks who wanted to use his farm to stage some kind of concert in August. They were going to call it Woodstock.

Colts owner Carroll Rosenbloom had invited the former governor of Maryland to be one of his special guests for the game. Spiro Agnew said he was a little busy, what with his new duties as Vice President of the United States coming up, but because the Colts were his favorite team, he'd find time.

Max Yasgur and Spiro Agnew. The anti-Establishment Jets and the staunchly conservative Colts, opposite worlds on a scheduled collision course. It was 1969 and it was the Super Bowl and the winds of change swirled and, yeah, it was the perfect shape of things to come.

At the Galt Ocean Mile Hotel, the man behind the front desk told Joe Namath that his room, The Governors Suite, Room 534, had been occupied during the previous Super Bowl by Vince Lombardi. Namath saw no particular significance or symbolism in any of this.

"Does it have an ice bucket?" was all he wanted to know.

Half a mile away, the Colts' team hotel, the Statler Hilton, still was getting ready for the arrival of the NFL champions. Ewbank had brought the Jets down early in order to get in some quality practice in decent weather. Winter had frozen New York, and the Jets had been forced to practice for the AFL Championship Game at a nearby armory.

But to bring this team of roustabouts to a hedonistic setting such as Fort Lauderdale seemed a needless temptation. Ewbank explained that was why the players' wives were being brought down.

"What better baby-sitters could you hope for?" Ewbank asked. "As for the bachelors, well, we'll just hope nobody gets lucky."

Later that night in the Rum Room, the lounge at the Galt, Don Maynard walked in and took a seat while Blackie Nelson and the Personalities were taking a break.

> Weeb Ewbank, the Jets' head coach, after assessing all the information available on the Colts: "We can beat these guys. We're going to win this game."

"I'll have a chocolate Coke," Maynard drawled.

The waitress asked him to repeat his order. He did and she left, still confused.

Don Maynard was 31 years old, a veteran wide receiver who had caught two touchdown passes in the AFL Championship Game against the Raiders. He was dragging his left leg. The hamstring muscle was very tender.

"No way I could run even half-speed," he says today. "I didn't practice until the last one before the game. Good thing the practices were closed. The Colts never knew. They double-covered a cripple most all day."

It was part of Ewbank's grand scheme. He was guessing the Colts would put Boyd on Maynard, who always lined up on the right side. And there always would be deep help from either of the Colts' safeties, Rick Volk or Jerry Logan. Maynard had been a deep threat ever since he came into pro football. If he could lure double coverage from Baltimore, Ewbank said, "George Sauer is going to have a field day."

Sauer was the Jets' other wide receiver. A deep thinker who disliked the violent nature of football, insisting it should be played more artistically, Sauer would be covered by Lenny Lyles, a veteran cornerback with lots of savvy. But Sauer ate up single coverage.

"Furthermore, the Colts' tendency to blitz a safety would play right into our plans," Ewbank said. "Whichever side the blitz came from, the receiver over there would simply break toward the vacant area in the middle. Joe was always looking for that. So were Maynard and Sauer. And if we kept our poise and executed well in our protection, we knew we were in business."

At the Galt that night 20 years ago, Maynard finished off his special concoction—"Chocolate Cokes are real common back home in Texas," he explained—and let the building drama wash gently upon him. Ten years earlier, Maynard had returned the opening kickoff for the New York Giants against the Baltimore Colts in a game often described as the "Greatest Game Ever Played." Cut after that season, Maynard harbored a quiet bitterness toward the Giants and the NFL in general.

"There were a bunch of us on the Jets who'd been cut loose by NFL teams," he says. "The AFL was considered the scrap heap. I was feeling kinda sorry for myself because my leg was hurting. But I figured I could help out in some way. Maybe I could contribute just on reputation."

Back in Baltimore, Colts wide receiver Jimmy Orr was doing a radio interview. Asked if he knew any of the Jets, Orr smiled and said, "Don Maynard . . . he and I were roommates at the Blue-Gray All-Star game 'bout ten years ago or so. Good guy, but know what I remember most about him? He used Mexican dimes as quarters for the pay phone."

Head coach Weeb Ewbank and assistant coach Walt Michaels pore over game films of the Colts as they prepare for the most important game in AFL history.

The Colts' passing game was built around all-pro tight end John Mackey, the one player Ewbank admitted "scared me to death. He's all-pro in every way." But Baltimore also had Orr, a wily possession-type receiver whose polished moves compensated for his diminished speed, and Willie Richardson, a swift and lanky receiver with big-play capabilities.

"The difference," Richardson said, "is that our receivers are used to working against NFL defenses."

Johnny Sample bristled. He was one of the ex-NFL players. In fact, he also played on that Colts' 1958 team. In fact, that team's coach was Weeb Ewbank.

"Lots of irony, huh?" Sample says today. "Winston Hill, who had a great game that day in Miami, had been cut by the Colts five years earlier. A lot of us had private grudges in that game. Nobody respected us but ourselves. We had more to prove. Me —I feel I had been blackballed out of the NFL. I *hated* the NFL. I knew we would be very ready for that game. I remember getting on my knees and praying. But I also remember that I was almost in a frenzy by the time the game finally arrived. The Colts could have done nothing but blow us kisses and I would have built myself into a warrior state anyway."

Of course, the Colts threw gasoline on the fire.

Logan said intimidation was one of their favorite psychological tools. Several other players confessed they thought the Raiders would have been a better opponent. And the point spread blazed like a Vegas marquee.

"Eighteen points still is hard to believe," Sample says.

♦

Colts halfback Tom Matte double-checked to make sure the tickets he'd ordered had been taken care of. He had invited his old Ohio State classmate, Jack Nicklaus, to the game.

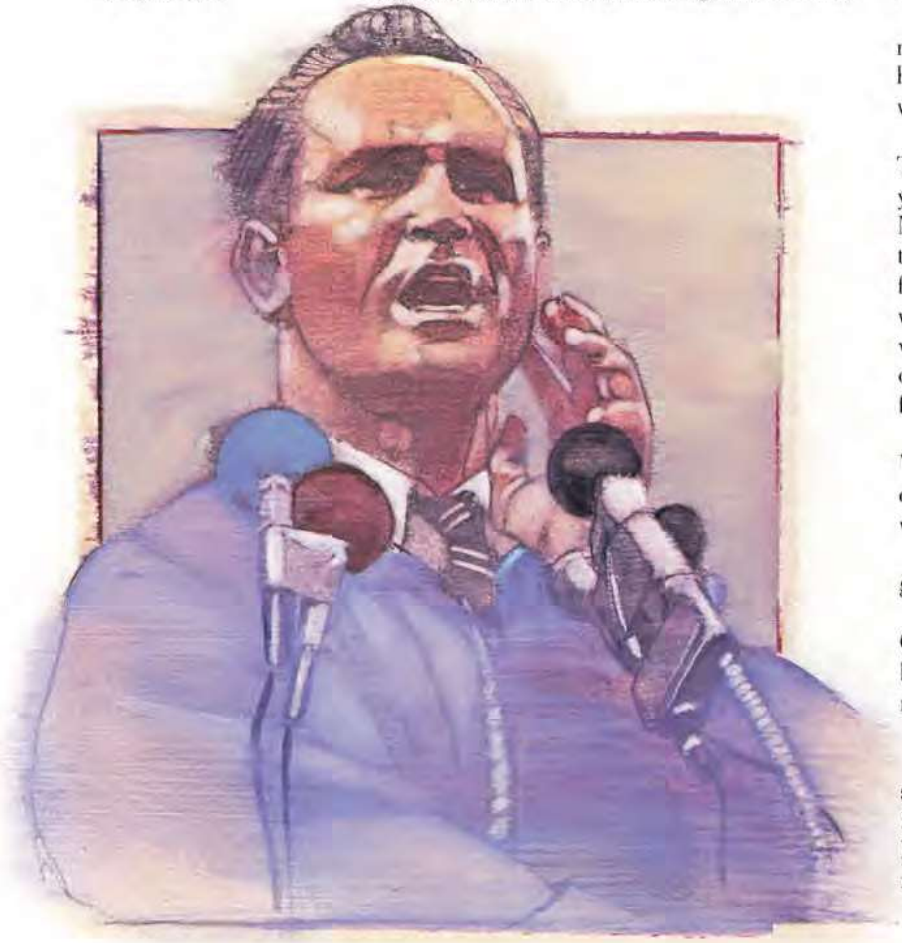
Colts linebacker Mike Curtis was beaming with pride. He had been invited to Nixon's inauguration.

There was just the matter of this football game.

Winston Hill said he'd blocked everything out of his mind from that rookie training camp. But he really hadn't. He remembered how, as a rookie with the Colts, Ordell Braase had made him look awkward in practice. He remembered when Shula had called him into his office and told him that Bob Vogel, the first-round draft pick who also was an offensive tackle, was looking good. And only one rookie tackle would make the team. Hill remembered that the Denver Broncos had told him to call them if he got cut. So he did. Collect. The Broncos wouldn't accept the call.

Weeb Ewbank did.

And now Hill was almost vibrating with electricity as he studied the man who would line up across from him: Ordell Braase.



Miami head coach Don Shula answers reporters' questions during a mid-week press conference.

Ewbank liked all the little personal range fires. He liked the way his team had compartmentalized the game. He harped about how nobody respected them. He loved it when most of the media questions involved how to stop the Colts. He sensed something wonderful. But he was afraid to talk about it in public.

Namath wasn't.

The quarterback was the Jets' figurehead—brash, exciting, talented. After beating the Raiders, Namath dropped his first bombshell, saying there were at least four quarterbacks in the AFL who were better than Morrall.

"Including me," he said with a grin.

Namath had fully blossomed in the 1968 season, escalating into the leader Ewbank had expected him to become. Always a student of the game, Namath realized that he did not have to force issues and make things happen all the time. He had discovered the value of ball control, of carrying out a game plan. He grasped the poise-and-execution theory until he had a stranglehold on it.

"But Joe also had this way of instilling confidence in us," former tackle Dave Herman says. "When he started talking, he was only saying things we wanted to believe. Then, after a while, we all did."

Namath's father was coming to the game. His mother was not. She was afraid her plane would be hijacked to Cuba. She told her son she'd rather watch the game on TV.

Namath had become the darling of the league. The year before, he had thrown for more than 4,000 yards. His charisma transcended the playing field. Many of his teammates had grown beards or mustaches during the season, defying the AFL ban on facial hair. Namath had drawn the most attention with his Fu Manchu mustache. When his teammates were paid small stipends for shaving in commercials, Namath drew the outrageous sum of $10,000 for using an electric razor.

And when he showed up at the Miami Springs Villas to accept an award from the Miami Touchdown Club, everyone should have expected fireworks.

"We're going to win this game," Namath said. "I guarantee it."

Douglas MacArthur said he would return. Cassius Clay, who became Muhammad Ali, predicted knockouts in rhyme. But nobody guaranteed victory out loud.

Particularly 18-point underdogs.

Namath let the gasp that shot around the room subside. Then he said it isn't a real good feeling, being a prohibitive favorite, pointing out the Jets had been three-touchdown favorites twice during the regular season. "We lost each time," Namath said.

"I just hope the Colts think about that real long and hard."

The next morning's *Miami Herald* bannered Namath's boast.

At his daily press conference, Ewbank said, "My guy usually doesn't whistle Dixie. I wish to God he hadn't said it. But he said it."

Something strange happened. The game seemed to become something bigger. The merger between the two leagues already had been voted into existence more than two years earlier. But because of the Green Bay Packers' relatively easy victories in the first two showdowns, the dissent was loud and constant. Now the young turks of the AFL were kicking the walls, angrily demanding respect and guaranteeing they would beat a team that had lost only twice in its last 30 games.

Sauer described the feeling as "an awareness, a realization that the biggest game in pro football was coming. If we won, it would make the merger legitimate. It would put a stamp of credibility on everything."

Shula, who had become aroused when it sounded as if Namath had poor-mouthed Morrall two weeks earlier, was more confused than upset when he was told of Namath's latest eruption.

"He can say whatever the hell he wants. It's all going to come down to Sunday," said the Colts' coach.

Herman's wife Leah fretted. Her husband had been switched to a new position—from guard to tackle—against Oakland. Everything had worked fine. But now, Leah lamented, he'd have to block Bubba Smith, the 6-foot 7-inch, 275-pound defensive end.

"If we lose, Dave will be blamed," Leah said. "If Bubba Smith gets to Namath, it'll be Dave's fault. I hear all this 'Kill, Bubba, Kill' stuff and I want to cry. I don't know how Dave is getting any sleep."

When Herman was a senior at Michigan State, he remembered the menacing freshman from Texas, the man everyone called Bubba.

"Yeah, I remember Herman, too," Smith said. "He was always yelling at underclassmen. I don't like people yelling at me."

Jeff Richardson, a reserve lineman on the Jets, had been Smith's roommate at Michigan State. He was asked by a reporter what he remembered most about big Bubba.

"Nobody could block him in practice," Richardson said.

The Colts' defensive front four was a concern for Ewbank. But he respected the Baltimore linebackers even more.

"We can't be fancy," Ewbank said. "We have to be very basic to win. We must be able to run the ball or we're sunk. This probably will not be a pretty game to watch. Or much fun to play. In the first two games with the NFL, the AFL lost its poise. There was always one big play—a turnover or something—that caused the game's complexion to change drastically. We must avoid that. We must keep our poise. And we must execute."

Ewbank walked with a limp, a souvenir from an accident he had suffered while riding on the shoulders of his players after the Raiders game. In the privacy of the closed practices, Ewbank used a gray cane to get around. Years later, he would require double hip replacement. But during the biggest week in franchise history, he would grit it out.

♦

At press headquarters, the Hilton Plaza, Ed Weisman, an NBC publicist, introduced himself to the new receptionist who'd been hired to help with the media crunch.

The blonde woman smiled and said, "Hi. My name is Heidi."

Weisman's jaw dropped. Then he laughed and said, "You've got to be kidding. Heidi? Really? Heidi is your name?"

Memories of the Heidi game still lingered among NBC employees. (Two months earlier, NBC had left a game in progress between the Jets and the Raiders with New York ahead 32-29 to go to a TV movie version of *Heidi*; the Raiders rallied to win 43-32).

"Heidi, welcome aboard," Weisman said. "It's been a crazy week already. I have a feeling it's only just begun."

Several Jets players went on a chartered deep-sea fishing trip several miles out into the Atlantic. Winston Hill hooked a huge hammerhead shark that measured seven feet and weighed 250 pounds.

"Almost as big as Bubba," Hill said when he got back to shore.

Billy Ray Smith, one of the anchors of the Baltimore defensive line, was asked what he thought of Joe Namath.

"He can throw a football into a teacup from fifty yards," Smith said. "But he ought to keep his mouth shut. He'll hold onto his teeth longer."

Snell and Emerson Boozer instinctively rubbed their knees at the same time during one film session. Each had had major knee surgery. In fact, 20 Jets were veterans of knee operations.

Dr. James Nicholas, the Jets' team doctor, had operated on the likes of Greta Garbo and President John F. Kennedy. But he knew, at least for the next few days, the most important knees in existence belonged to the New York Jets.

"One thing we found out," Shula says now, "was

> Billy Ray Smith, Colts defensive tackle, on Namath: "He can throw a football into a teacup from fifty yards. But he ought to keep his mouth shut."

how good Boozer and Snell were as blockers. Boozer especially. Each was excellent at picking up the blitz."

Almost everything was in place for Ewbank... including the role of underdog.

Jets tight end Pete Lammons had shouted during one film session to turn off the projector. "It's making us overconfident," he said.

Lammons was only half-kidding.

"You could sense it more and more," Sample says. "We could see they weren't supermen. We had answers for everything they did. We knew we were going to win."

In a poll of 55 sportswriters and broadcasters, 49 felt the Colts would win the game. At Colts headquarters, the mood was not nearly as assured.

◆

Game day arrived, and it was raining. Don Shula attended morning mass at the Piux X Catholic Church on Highway A1A. At the Galt, Jets safety Bill Baird wiped the sleep from his eyes. He'd had nightmares all night. He kept dreaming his helmet slipped down over his eyes, blinding him. Meanwhile, Earl Morrall threw touchdown passes in his dreams.

Randy Beverly, the cornerback who had been playing semipro ball for Jersey City two years earlier, confessed to teammates he was scared. "I don't want to look like a clown out there," he said.

Harry Hulmes, the Colts' general manager, asked Bobby Boyd if there was any way the Jets possibly could win. Boyd shrugged and said, "They have all that speed at wide receiver. Don Maynard can burn you deep."

Meanwhile, Maynard was wondering if he'd even be able to play. His sore hamstring was rested but it still was tender. But at least the injury had remained a secret. The Colts had no idea Maynard was questionable for the game.

Jim Wilson was head of concessions at the Orange Bowl. The 18-point spread made him smile. In tight games, people stay seated; they're afraid to go buy food because they might miss something. Wilson was hoping for a blowout.

In Room 136 at the Galt, Weeb and Lucy Ewbank talked softly. It sure was nice seeing Johnny Unitas and his wife Dotty again. Ewbank had coached Unitas during his years of greatness. This time, though, because of an elbow injury, Unitas was reduced to being a sore-armed backup to Morrall.

"I thought about it but I didn't ask him how the arm was," Weeb said. "It wouldn't have been fair."

A poll of 55 sportswriters and broadcasters revealed that 49 of them felt the Colts would win the game. At Colts headquarters, the mood was not nearly as assured.

At the pregame meal, Shula said, "Everything we've accomplished all year is riding on this game. We can't wait for the Jets to lose it. We've got to go out and win it ourselves."

The two motorcycle cops in the brown uniforms and white helmets wheeled onto the road. The caravan of Jets' buses, with big windshield wipers clicking, fell into formation. The 25-mile trip to the Orange Bowl was under way.

Snell wiggled his knee. Twice in the week he'd had it drained. Namath's knee also had been aspirated. Boozer looked out the window, wishing he had a cigarette. Winston Hill thought about Braase. All this Vietnam stuff, kids getting drafted, going off to war. He remembered from his days with the Colts that Braase had pulled a tour of military duty while a "police action" was raging in Korea.

Maynard's injury had been hidden. But so had a couple of Colts' ailments. Braase, for instance, had a bad back that had flared up during the night. Bubba Smith's left ankle, which had been twisted in the Cleveland game, still was a little puffy.

The injuries bothered the New Yorkers most on running plays. They were all right on passing plays. Because the Jets had this AFL image of mad bombers and all-out aerial attacks, they didn't expect any problems.

In the dressing room, Ewbank's words were not measured. He did not have a special speech. He sensed the aggressive restraint among his players. He knew they were in the right frame of mind. He decided to join them.

"After we win," he said, "don't pick me up and ruin my other hip. I'll walk, okay?"

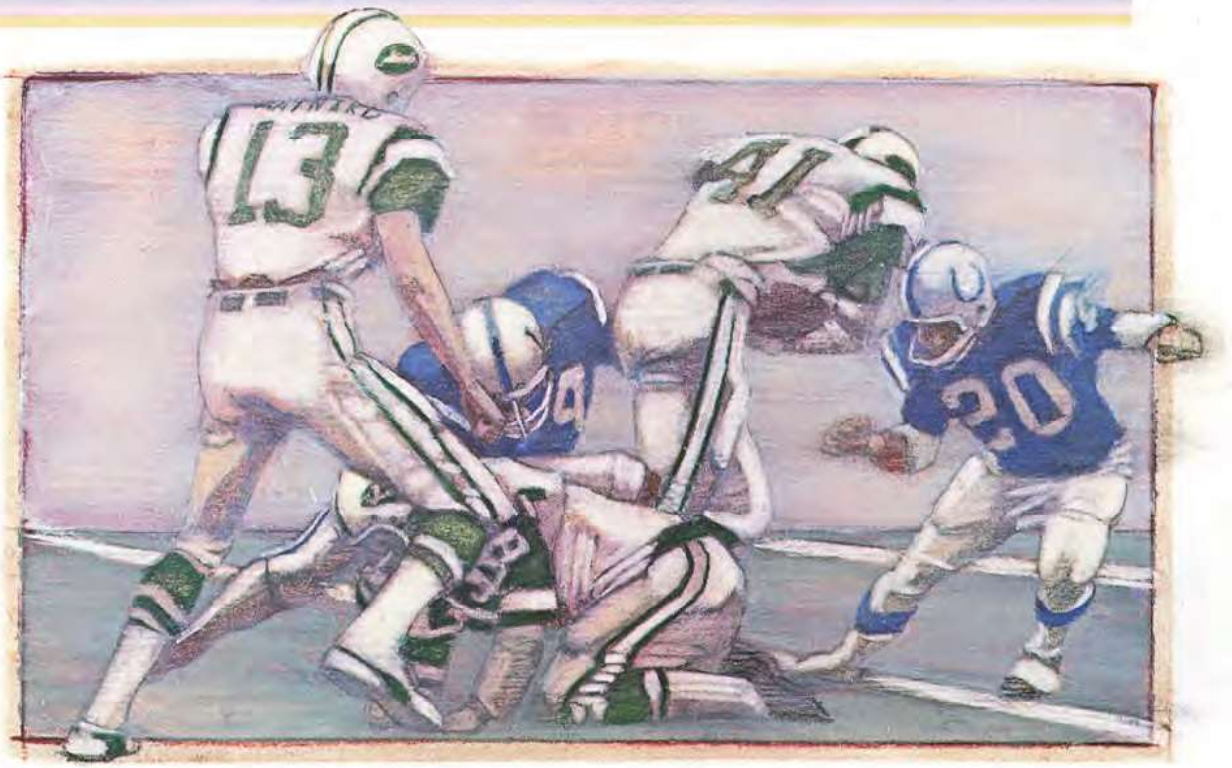
The cheer was a bellow. Then came a roar of anger.

In some of the official programs, the regular-season statistics of the Oakland Raiders were listed instead of the Jets'.

"Somebody's gonna pay," said Jim Hudson, Namath's roommate.

Hudson's job would be to shadow John Mackey. It might have been a preoccupation for a lot of players. But the first thing Hudson thought about when he walked onto the painted grass of the Orange Bowl was a New Year's Day game a couple of years earlier, Texas versus Alabama. Hudson had been a quarterback in college at Texas, and that night, he had thrown a 69-yard touchdown pass to teammate George Sauer. That play, plus two interceptions by safety Pete Lammons had carried the Longhorns to victory over Alabama and its hotshot quarterback, Joe Namath.

"Hook 'em Horns," Hudson said with a smile that disappeared when he spotted the Colts coming onto the field.



The Jets' main running weapon was the power of fullback Matt Snell, shown picking up some of his 121 yards on 30 carries.

Unitas wore a parka and stared at the skies. The wind was tricky. It could affect passes. It could mess up field goals. The 10-time Pro Bowl player didn't figure to take off the parka. When the Colts got far enough ahead, Shula wouldn't put his legend in for mop-up duty.

The AFL players wore their names on their jerseys. In the NFL, they did not. The respective game balls also differed slightly. Namath's emergence as a thinking man's quarterback never would be more evident. At least half the time in the huddle, his only instructions were, "Play at the line. Check with me."

That meant Namath would look over the Colts' defense before calling a play as he set up behind the center. That meant he would try to recognize the numerous different looks—at least 12 of them—Baltimore liked to employ. And he would do it in a matter of seconds.

Assistant coach Walt Michaels shouted instructions in a stream of consciousness from the Jets' sideline.

"Safety men, be aware of Matte. He throws the halfback pass and he'll also throw back to Morrall. Remember the Atlanta film."

In the regular season against the Falcons, the Colts had run a play on which Matte took a handoff and swept to his right, then stopped and tossed back to Morrall, who promptly threw a touchdown pass to Jimmy Orr.

"In the last play of our last defensive practice before Super Bowl," Ewbank said. "Babe Parilli threw the pass off that play. It went for a touchdown."

Lloyd Geisler's solitary trumpet rendition of the National Anthem was a moving one. The first trumpet of the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, D.C., brought a brief moment of seriousness to the carnival. When he had finished, the cheering resumed.

Referee Tommy Bell flipped a coin into the air. Johnny Sample called "Heads."

"Heads it is," Bell said.

"We receive," Sample said.

Lou Michaels teed up the ball and Earl Christy waited on the goal line. Pro football was about to enter a new horizon.

On the sideline, Sample's growing rage was uncontrollable. He had not been able to sleep. He had played for the Colts, had been a part of two NFL championship teams. In his wallet, he carried an old newspaper headline, a quote from Vince Lombardi, saying the AFL was not in the same class as the NFL.

Sample roared to teammates on the defense: "They ain't better than us. They gotta know that."

Namath stepped into the huddle to call the first play. Before the game, he had flashed on an idea. How about starting the game in the two-minute offense? No huddle, wide open from the start. Ewbank had talked him out of it, but Namath thought about it as he prepared to call the first play.

The second play was a handoff to Snell. The big running back took off left, as usual. The Jets were left-handed on offense. The play, called 19-Straight, was one that Snell would run 17 times in the game.

When safety Rick Volk came up to make the tackle, the collision was a loud one. Volk didn't get up

With Don Maynard serving as a decoy for Namath passes almost all game, George Sauer had a large place in the sun with eight catches for 133 yards.

right away. Knocked groggy, he staggered off the field.

Maynard blew by Boyd, and he was picked up by Jerry Logan. He then galloped behind Logan. The pass was several inches too long. A step too long.

"It was still an important play," Namath said. "Maynard was open. He got beyond their bomb-proof secondary. If his leg was healthy we'd have scored. But he put the fear of God in them. It was a real show of courage, going all out like that. But because of that one play, they kept up their double coverage. That opened things up for George Sauer on the other side. To a lot of people it looked like just another incomplete pass. But it really was one of the game's turning points."

Sauer, who was described by Ewbank as "a fast Raymond Berry," was making the most of his single coverage. He also was helped by the weakened condition of Colts cornerback Lenny Lyles, who had suffered from tonsillitis during the week, at one time running a fever that caused his temperature to reach 103 degrees. But because the Colts feared Maynard would hurt them on deep patterns, Sauer wound up catching eight passes for 133 yards.

The Colts got the ball and began to move it. A screen pass to Mackey gained 19 yards. Matte picked up 10 more on a sweep. Three more runs got another first down. Then the Colts quickly moved to another first down at the Jets' 19-yard line.

"Hit somebody," growled Gerry Philbin in the Jets' defensive huddle. "We're getting embarrassed out here. Hit somebody, damn it."

To which Johnny Sample barked, "Make them make a mistake. They'll crumble."

But on the next play, Willie Richardson broke free as Hudson fell down. Morrall's pass was perfect.

Richardson dropped it.

"Who knows how the game would have come out if he had caught that ball?" Morrall says today. "He didn't make the play. It was one of many we failed to make that day."

On the next play, Tom Mitchell, the other tight end in the Colts' offense, found an opening and was just as open as Richardson.

Morrall overthrew the pass.

When Morrall was forced from the pocket on third down and was pulled down by Philbin at the line of scrimmage, Baltimore had to settle for a field-goal attempt.

But Boyd, the holder on kicks, didn't like the feeling. The breeze was erratic in the open end of the Orange Bowl. Boyd knew that any kick from this area was going to be tricky.

A 27-yard field-goal attempt by Lou Michaels was wide.

"At the time, we were disappointed, but not devastated," Shula says. "We'd moved the ball well. We figured there would be other opportunities."

But the pattern had been set. The Colts were going to be plagued by mistakes all day. The Jets would play almost error-free football.

A few minutes later, Sauer took a short pass, was hit, and fumbled at the Jets' 12-yard line.

Ewbank cringed. It was similar mistakes that had doomed Kansas City and Oakland in the first two Super Bowls against Green Bay. After that, the AFL teams had lost their poise...and the NFL floodgates burst open.

"Poise, poise, poise," Ewbank screamed. His hip was hurting. His team was in trouble. He was scared.

After two running plays moved the ball to the 6, Morrall went for the touchdown. He saw Mitchell, and threw. Middle linebacker Al Atkinson tipped the ball. Beverly made a diving, rolling interception.

"That was the game in a nutshell," Tom Matte says. "We were a great team because we did not make mistakes. But that day, we threw interceptions. I lost a fumble. We had a chance to have twenty-seven points in the first half. It was right there. Twenty-seven points. We didn't get any."

Taking over at the 20, the Jets went to work. Once again, Namath was the antithesis of his rebel image. The Jets were a picture of restraint and composure. With poise and execution, they marched to a touchdown. Twelve plays and 80 yards later, 5:57 into the second quarter, Snell headed left. The four-yard run put the Jets ahead. It was the first time in the short history of the Super Bowl that the AFL had held a lead.

"During that drive," says Jets center John Schmitt,

"we could hear them cussing in their defensive huddle. They were really frustrated."

Emerson Boozer said later he never felt as much satisfaction in simply blocking on a simple run to the left. Winston Hill admitted that Ordell Braase had lost a step in the five years since they last had met. The Colts' linebackers, whom Ewbank considered to be Shula's strongest weapons after Mackey, were almost invisible.

And the Colts continued to be error-prone. A Super Bowl-record 58-yard run by Matte set up a first down at the Jets' 16. Sample and Matte exchanged words after the play.

"You're a dirty player," Matte snarled.

"You ain't nothing, Matte," Sample replied. "Getting caught like this. You shoulda scored."

Two plays later, Sample intercepted. He got up, tapped Richardson on the helmet, and asked, "Is this what you were looking for?"

"I wanted to break his head off," Richardson said later.

Running off the field, Sample waved at Matte.

The first half was almost over. The Colts had the ball, and the packed Orange Bowl was quiet, stunned by the Jets' domination. The experts had figured the AFL team's only chance to win was with tricks and gadget plays and long, desperate passes.

But that's what the Colts were reduced to trying. With 25 seconds left in the half, Matte took a pitch and headed right. Then he stopped, wheeled, and threw the ball back to Morrall.

"Same play they pulled against Atlanta...same play we practiced against," Walt Michaels says. "We should have been ready for it. But we were completely fooled."

Jets safety Bill Baird bit on the Matte run. He came up to help make the tackle.

Jimmy Orr flew downfield, ridiculously wide open. Beverly's responsibility was to cover Orr short. Baird had him long.

It was a certain touchdown. All Morrall had to do was throw the ball. All Orr had to do was catch it.

"I never saw him," Morrall says.

"The play is designed for Orr," Shula says. "Morrall was supposed to look for him first."

"I waved my arm when I realized he didn't see me," Orr says. "It's hard to believe still—being that wide open. I was where I was supposed to be. It was a perfect play...I thought."

Instead, Morrall saw fullback Jerry Hill, who also was open. But only briefly. Hudson, who might have become one of the great safeties had it not been for knee injuries, closed quickly and intercepted.

♦

Halfway through Super Bowl III, Don Shula had some decisions to make. Morrall was not playing well. Did he dare make a switch? Shula had Unitas, and the veteran already had told him he could play if he was needed.

Shula took inventory. Three touchdown threats had been ruined by interceptions. Michaels had missed two makeable field goals.

Twenty-seven possible points.

"I decided to give Morrall one more series," Shula says. "Realistically, we were behind 7-0 and only because we were the favorites did things look so bad."

On the first play from scrimmage in the third quarter, Matte fumbled and linebacker Ralph Baker recovered for the Jets.

"That certainly wasn't Earl's fault," Shula said.

Nevertheless, Shula asked Unitas how his tender elbow felt. Then he told him to start loosening up.

The Jets were unable to move the ball. But Ewbank urged Namath to remember how important it was to get at least a field goal out of the series. Namath nodded that he understood the situation.

> Earl Morrall's last grasp at glory ended ignobly in a sack. As the Jets took over, the crowd roared at what it saw: number 19 [Unitas] warming up.

Jim Turner had set records with his kicking. He and his square-toed shoe were studies in consistency. He had an ally in Curley Johnson, the team's punter who held on field goals. Johnson had one other mission: to remind Turner to keep his head down when he kicked. It was the one thing, Turner explained, that caused him to miss kicks.

But Johnson had a strange way of putting things. For instance, before the game, Johnson had gone from locker to locker, saying, "Chicken ain't nothing but a bird. Football ain't nothing but a game."

And so, as Turner lined up his 32-yard kick in the third quarter, Johnson turned to him and said, "Bow that neck."

Turner says that he blinked and wondered what that meant for a split second. "Then I relaxed," he said, "and yeah, my head was down."

The Jets' lead was 10-0.

In the third quarter, Baltimore ran just seven offensive plays, gaining a total of 10 yards.

Morrall's last grasp at glory ended ignobly when he was crushed beneath a tackle by linebacker Carl McAdams. The last official entry for Earl Morrall in Super Bowl III was a sack for a two-yard loss.

As the Jets took over, the Orange Bowl crowd roared at what it saw: Number 19 was warming up on the Baltimore sideline.

"It was wild. I was scared all over again," Ewbank says. "I'd seen him [Unitas] do so many great things before. Just warming up—I got scared."

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"I GUARANTEE IT"

It was the moment at which legends are made as Ewbank, Namath, and Joe's father celebrated the unlikeliest Super Bowl triumph of them all. And as the trio and the Jets and their followers reveled in the victory, the downcast Colts pondered the circumstance history had crafted for them.

A 39-yard completion to Sauer set up another field goal by Turner.

"Football's funny," Bubba Smith says now. "When they were up 10-0, I was kinda down because we not only needed a touchdown but a field goal to tie it. But when they went up 13-0, I was thinking we only needed two touchdowns and we'd be ahead."

On Unitas's first series, he appeared to have nothing up his sleeve but a sore elbow. Three plays later, the Colts punted.

Ninety-four seconds into the fourth quarter, Turner kicked another field goal to make it 16-0.

Braase was out of the game. His back had stiffened and he had become a liability. The same could be said for linebacker Don Shinnick, who was injured. Volk had returned, but it was a mistake. He made several mental errors.

Unitas finally got something going, driving the Colts to the Jets' 25. But when Orr broke into the end zone, open, Unitas's pass was short. Beverly clutched the interception.

Turner missed a field goal after the Jets had used up almost five minutes of clock.

"We were looking and figuring," Smith says. "Two touchdowns and a field goal. We still felt we could do it."

From his own 20, Unitas threw three consecutive incompletions. Then, almost as if he entered a time warp, he clicked.

His fourth-down pass to Orr went for 17 yards and a first down. He followed by twice hitting third-down passes. It seemed like 1958 all over again. But when it became first-and-goal at the 1, the Colts needed the quick touchdown.

It took three downs before Jerry Hill finally squeezed into the end zone.

"We lost at least a minute there," Shula says. "That looks insignificant in hindsight. But it was a big factor."

The shutout of the Team of the Decade had lasted 56 minutes and 41 seconds. It had required one fourth-down completion, three Jets penalties, and three tries from 36 inches away to overcome it.

"We needed the onside kickoff," Unitas says. "We felt if we could get it we still had a chance."

And somehow they got it, with Mitchell winding up on top of a squib kick by Michaels.

"It was an electric moment," remembers Frank Ramos, the Jets' director of public relations. "The mood in the entire stadium changed in one second. On our sideline, you could really feel the anxiety."

There still was 3:14 to play. Unitas led the Colts to the Jets' 19-yard line. It was fourth down. Score here, they were thinking, and anything's still possible. The horrible day could be salvaged after all.

Unitas looked for Orr once more. Linebacker Larry Grantham retreated, reached up, and felt the wonderful sensation of leather.

The tipped pass flew beyond Orr. Grantham's reaction was to pull off his helmet and throw it into the air.

"Before it came down, I felt like a fool," he says. "There were still two minutes left. I got real humble real quick."

In the stands, the chant of "AFL, AFL" was loud and distinct. On the sidelines, Johnny Sample bit on his lower lip, trying to concentrate on the Jets as they came to the line of scrimmage. Snell carried six consecutive times before Johnson punted. The Colts had the ball with eight seconds left on the clock.

Dave Herman nudged Joe Namath and said with a grin, "You told the truth, Joe. Nothin' but the truth."

Ewbank was the only coach to win championships in both leagues. Asked which meant the most—today or the famous 1958 game: "I'll take today."

Namath walked off the field, head tilted slightly downward. His only statement was the solitary index finger he waved. Number One.

Ewbank met Shula with a firm handshake.

"We got all the breaks," Ewbank said.

"You have a fine team, Weeb," Shula said. "Enjoy this."

With total disregard for their coach's hips, the Jets deposited Ewbank into the shower. Their total disregard for conformity had returned. They were rebels once more.

"Hey, Pete, welcome to the AFL," Lammons shouted as Commissioner Pete Rozelle entered the locker room.

Johnny Sample's words were stinging.

"They choked," he said. "They panicked. They made the mistakes."

A visitor shook hands with the players. Al Davis, the Oakland Raiders' owner, asked aloud, "Have we reached parity? Or have we passed it?"

Ewbank was the first coach to win championships in both leagues. He was asked which one meant the most—that famous 1958 overtime thriller against the Giants or the victory over the Colts.

"I'll take today," Ewbank said, perhaps remembering that day in 1963 when he was fired by the Colts.

How good is Namath? someone asked Unitas.

"You saw it—sixteen to seven. That's how good. That's how you measure a quarterback. Did his team win? Then he was good. He is good."

Shula shook his head. Mistakes will always haunt, always hurt.

"I told my team we will have to meet a *real* challenge now. We will have to deal with this loss and respond to it. It will be a difficult offseason. But we have to go on from here. Today, time finally ran out on us."

Years later, Shula still grimaces at the memory.

"I'm not happy with how we played," he says. "Not then, not in retrospect twenty years later. But you have to give the Jets credit. They really had good players. They had an excellent coaching staff. My team accomplished a lot that year. But unless you win the final game, it's forgotten. We lived with it though. We swallowed our disappointment."

In Super Bowl V, the Baltimore Colts won. The quarterbacks were Earl Morrall and Johnny Unitas. In winning Super Bowl VII, the Miami Dolphins went undefeated. The quarterback most of the season was Earl Morrall.

"One bad game does not represent a man's career," Shula says. "Certainly not Earl Morrall's."

But Morrall still struggles with the strange turn of events on that January day in 1969.

"I can't account for it," he said immediately after the game.

Twenty years later, his opinion is unchanged.

"They made the plays and we didn't," Morrall says. "I don't think people looked at that game clearly. The Jets were *under*estimated. We may have been *over*estimated."

Bobby Boyd said the Jets' ability to run the football (they had 142 yards on the ground) was the only shocker in the game.

"We really thought we could stop that," he says. "I thought. . .ah, well, we lost the game and I thought we were going to win. But so did a lot of people. Execution is always the name of the game. They got the ring and they deserved it. And you can talk until you turn blue about which team had better players. The whole thing comes down to who won. Whoever wins is the best team."

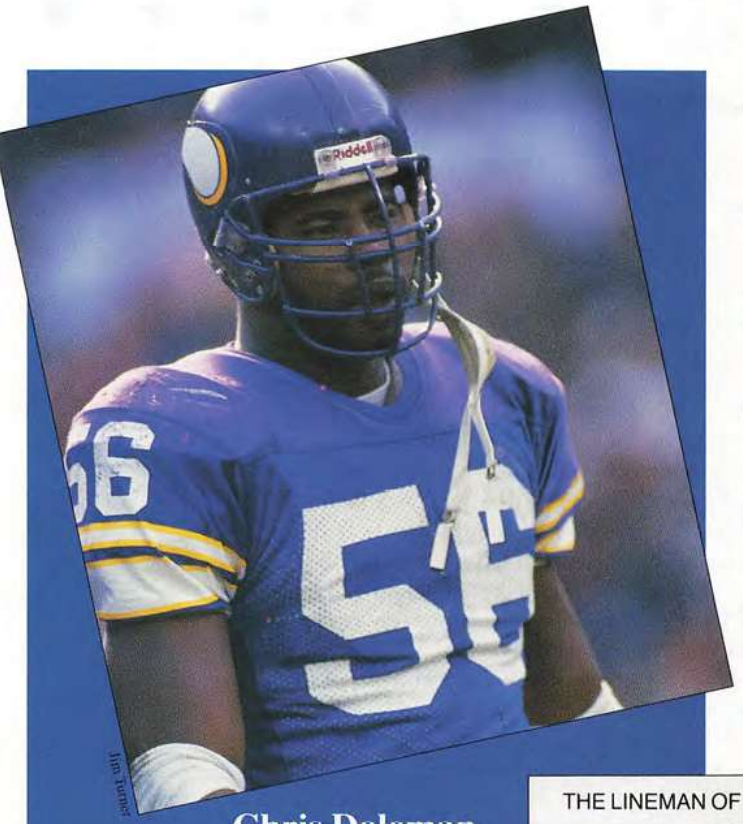
Professional football had a turning point that day in 1969. At the crossroads, someone called an audible. Nothing turned out the way it was supposed to. After the Kansas City Chiefs beat the Minnesota Vikings in Super Bowl IV, the merger became official. Two years later, the Colts and the Jets were in the same division. The umbrella of the NFL opened wider.

"That one game was perfect testament to the nature of the sport," Ewbank says. "We were playing, I suppose, for an entire league. But everyone else saw it that way. My players, my team, we did not have that large of focus. There was $15,000 a player at stake. There were the instincts of football in motion. And human nature—beat the man across from you. Especially if you keep getting told how much better he is than you.

"Sometimes you just respond." ♦

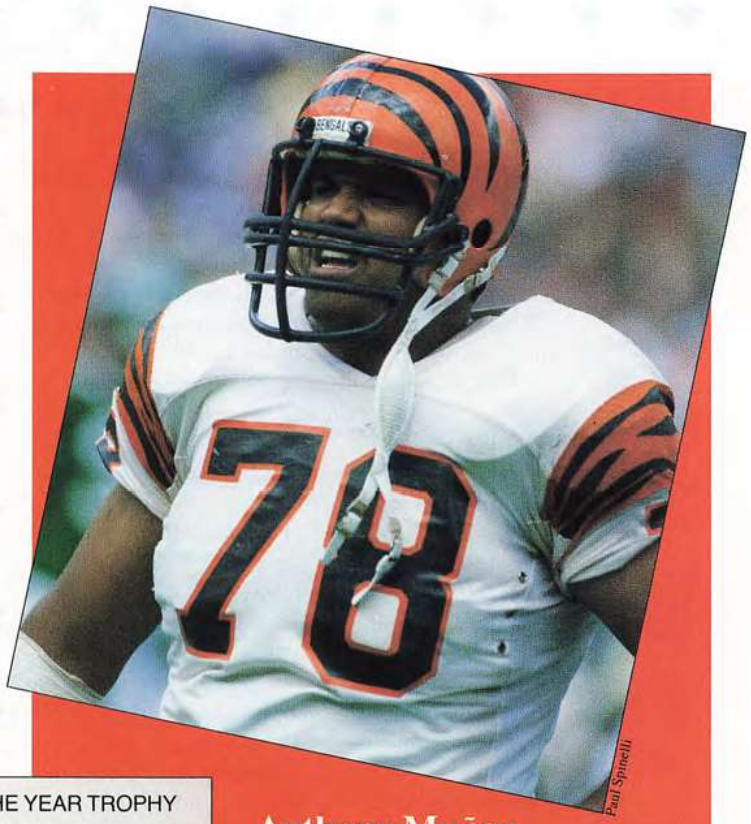
NFL LINEMAN OF THE YEAR Lite BEER

AND THE WINNERS ARE...



Jim Turner

Chris Doleman
Defensive End
Minnesota Vikings



Paul Spinelli

Anthony Muñoz
Tackle
Cincinnati Bengals

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Miller Brewing Co., Milw., WI

Perfect Dolphins

They Were 17-0 in 1972...and Most of Them Still Are on Winning Streaks

By Craig Dolch

1988 Photographs by Al Messerschmidt

Usually, it happens by mid- or late October. Sometimes it might not happen until November. But for every season since 1972, it has happened, and when it does—when every NFL team has tasted defeat—the telephone lines in Miami start to light up.

This year, the conversation went something like this: "Did you see who lost this week?"

"Yeah, Cincinnati got upset by New England."

"Well, another year has gone by and we're still the only ones."

Another year has gone by, and the 1972 Miami Dolphins' spot in history has been preserved.

The Perfect Dolphins. Undefeated, untied, and undaunted.

Seventeen-oh—and-oh-my.

Teams have come close to matching the Dolphins of 16 years ago. Twice this decade, teams have started the season with double-digit winning streaks (the 1984 Dolphins won 11 and the 1985 Bears won 12), only to get ambushed far short of the standard.

While these starts have caused some anxious moments for the 1972 Dolphins, the endings have only reaffirmed the significance of their achievement.

"You better believe I keep track of when every team has a loss," says Nick Buoniconti, the former captain and middle linebacker. "It means a lot to us. That's what separates us from every other team that won the Super Bowl. It's the only time in my life that I've ever been perfect."

It's the only time in professional sports history—at least the modern-day version—that a team has been perfect. It's one of the few records in sports that can't be broken—perfection can only be matched.

There has been talk lately that the men who played and coached for the 1972 Dolphins should start an annual celebration every time the last unbeaten NFL team is defeated. Considering that 11 of the 40 players who dressed for Super Bowl VII still live in Miami, and four others live in South Florida, it appears such a reunion is overdue.

For example, Bob Griese always could walk out his front door and holler for Dick Anderson and Buoniconti to come over for a quick toast. This trio of former Dolphins all live within four houses of each other in an affluent area of Miami.

Geographic proximity isn't the only thing these former teammates have in common. For as much as these players accomplished on the field in 1972, many have achieved even more success in the 16 years since the Perfect Season.

All-pros and Pro Bowl players have become doctors and corporate presidents. First-string players and key backups have moved into new roles as network announcers and one was a state senator.

No less than four of these men—Anderson, Buoniconti, Griese, and Howard Twilley—have become millionaires, and at least a half-dozen others are closing in on the figure, depending upon which criteria one uses to determine the seven-figure bracket. Not bad for a team that has only one player—backup quarterback Earl Morrall—who has turned 50.

Is it a coincidence that many of these men have been twice blessed? Hardly.

"I believe there's a direct parallel between an experience that athletes have on the field and with their other endeavors," says Paul Warfield, the Pro Football Hall of Fame wide receiver. "You're not blocking and tackling anyone anymore, but the other attributes—hard work, sacrifice, and not settling for second-best—are still at work here."

Of course, not all of the 1972 Dolphins found the gold at the end of the rainbow. The most publicized case was running back Eugene (Mercury) Morris, who spent 3½ years in a federal prison on a drug charge. Since being released in 1986, Morris has become a frequent speaker against drugs in Miami-area schools.

While most of the Dolphins took advantage of their association with the Perfect Season to launch successful business careers, some looked at that season as simply another experience in their lives. Nothing more, nothing less.

But there's no denying the unique association these players share. That's demonstrated by the fact that although most of these players won another Super Bowl ring the following season, the only ring

LARRY LITTLE
HEAD FOOTBALL COACH
WILDCATS

they wear is the one awarded after the 1972 season.

On the top of the ring are 16 small diamonds and one large diamond—a stone for each win, with the largest one signifying the Super Bowl victory. On one side of the ring are the two words not found on any other Super Bowl ring: "Perfect Season."

Much has happened to these men in the 16 years since that special season. Some of it is bad. . . most of it good.

What follows are stories about eight of the more prominent members of the team and how their lives —and their perception of life—have changed. This is a story of how they see, remember, and reflect on their roles in sports history.

Left guard Bob Kuechenberg. Wide receiver Paul Warfield. Middle linebacker Nick Buoniconti. Head coach Don Shula. Quarterback Earl Morrall. Quarterback Bob Griese. Right guard Larry Little. Fullback Larry Csonka. The names are familiar. They no longer are boys playing a game every Sunday, but men in their middle years with most of their glories behind them. With all due respect to Roger Kahn, here's a look back at what some might call *The Boys of Fall*.

MALCOLM EMMONS

Guard Larry Little

Larry Little is reminded every year of how amazing it was—and is—for a football team to be perfect. Only now his perspective is that of being the head football coach at Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida.

Little's teams have won the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference title once and been runners-up another time since his arrival in 1983.

Little remains in the public spotlight, usually at speaking engagements or on recruiting trips. He says he doesn't mind it a bit when the talk inevitably turns more toward the 1972 Dolphins than the 1988 Wildcats.

"I know that's what people want to hear," Little says. "It doesn't bother me. Shoot, I'm glad to be remembered as being a part of something special. I hope that's one aspect of my life people never forget."

Cornerbacks never will forget the sight of number 66, arms chugging and eyes looking around for a target to hit, as he pulled out on one of the Dolphins' famed sweeps. From 1972-74, he was the dominant blocker in the game, twice being named NFL lineman of the year.

Remaining in football has given Little an opportunity to look back on the Perfect Season in a different light than most. His views combine the realism of a football coach with the confidence of a very talented player.

"When I look back, I see there was a lot of luck involved," Little says. "We had to have the ball bounce our way, and it did. But we were good enough to make our breaks. I still feel that from '72 through '74, we were the best team in history."

Many believe Little was one of the best guards ever to play the game. But he has yet to make the Pro Football Hall of Fame. For some reason, he wasn't even among the finalists last year.

"To tell you the truth, I didn't even think about it until someone called and told me I wasn't a finalist," Little says. "But I don't get upset at things I can't control. It would be great to make the Hall of Fame because that's the only thing left for me. But if it doesn't happen, life goes on."

Little doesn't have the chance to socialize with his old teammates because his fall weekends always are spent at Bethune-Cookman. But he was born and raised in Miami and his roots still are there.

Like most successful people, Little has learned from the past. No Dolphin hated the 12-minute run more than Little. Now he insists on a 12-minute run at Bethune-Cookman.

"I never said it wasn't good for you," he says with a laugh. "I just didn't like it."

MALCOLM EMMONS

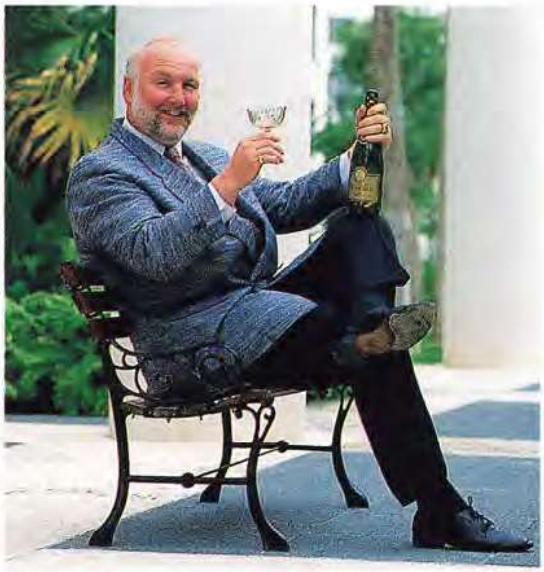
Guard Bob Kuechenberg

When Bob Kuechenberg retired in 1984, he might have done well to turn off the lights when he left. The last active link to the Perfect Season of 1972 had been severed.

So many things had happened since perfection. So many games had been won and lost. Kuechenberg had played in more seasons (15) and in more games (190)—including five Super Bowls—than any other Dolphin. He had endured two players' strikes, including one in 1982 when he drew the wrath of his young teammates for being the only player to cross the picket line.

But Kuechenberg always had taken the Frank Sinatra approach by doing things his way. He was a rare individual indeed, a man who was equally at home dripping blood in the fourth quarter of a close game, or sipping champagne while inspecting the art collection at his mansion on Star Island.

Now 42 and living in Encino, California, Kue-



chenberg is someone who enjoys his past successes while always looking forward to future ones. In a sense, he is pro football's version of Satchel Paige, never looking back for fear that something, or someone, might be gaining on him.

"I prefer not to dwell in the past," he says. "The past should be learned from and occasionally toasted. But then we should get back to the present and the future because that's where life's at. Football is a short-term career. One by one we all leave to move on to another life."

There are times, Kuechenberg admits, when he does look back on the undefeated season of 1972 with a combination of reverence and disbelief. One of his most vivid memories is of a talk he had with center Jim Langer (his road roommate) in the weight room, two days after the Dolphins had defeated the New York Jets 28-24 to run their record to 10-0 and assure themselves of the AFC East championship.

"I remember us saying, 'Okay, which one are we going to lose?' " Kuechenberg says. "We knew we had to lose a game because we didn't want to jinx ourselves by going undefeated and then lose the first playoff game. But as we looked at the games, we kept saying, 'We can't lose this game, we'll just lose the next game.' Before we knew it, we were 14-0, and then we *knew* we couldn't lose a game."

If there was a negative aspect to playing on the Perfect Team, it was that it came so early in Kuechenberg's career. He was only 24 when the season started, just three years removed from being cut by three NFL teams, and not close to the form that later would earn him six trips to the Pro Bowl.

"If I could have changed anything about the perfect season, it would be for it to have happened later in my career," he says. "I didn't reach my stride until later, and by then the team had slipped.

"You also had the problem of what do you do for an encore after a perfect season? Win it again? We did. But what's important is it happened, and that team is immortal. We all have a slice of sports immortality."

Kuechenberg spends most of his time running a travel agency, continuing his art collecting, and doing occasional telecasts on Dolphins preseason games. He talks about getting together with some of his ex-teammates, but for someone who remained in Miami until last summer, he kept very little contact with the old gang.

"We just don't get together nearly enough," Kuechenberg says. "I would have thought that Langer and Csonka and myself would have stayed in better touch, but, geez, we're all so busy. If you had told me at the time we accomplished this, that we would barely see each other some sixteen years later, then I would have told you that's disappointing."

Kuechenberg never stays disappointed long. That would be living in the past.

MALCOLM EMMONS

Head Coach Don Shula

With the exception of one person, everybody associated with the 1972 Miami Dolphins has had a chance to reflect and revel in the success of the Perfect Season.

Ironically, the one exception is the person who many claim was most responsible for the 17-0 season: head coach Don Shula.

Shula never has been able to look back. Not as long as there still are Dolphins teams to prepare and games to be won.

"It's a game of today," Shula says. "It's not a game of yesterday. I very rarely spend any time going back over old highlight films. You just don't have time for it. Someday there's going to be time to smell the roses and go back and enjoy some of the things that have happened in my career."

But not now. Not with Shula, 59, trying to find a way to get the Dolphins back to the Super Bowl.

There are times, however, when Shula at least will discuss the 1972 season. Interestingly, one of the first topics he'll bring up is what would have happened if the Dolphins had *lost* the Super Bowl.

"There was always the realization that if we're 16-0 and lose the Super Bowl and finish 16-1, we're going to be talked about as a failure," Shula says. "Personally, I was 0-2 in Super Bowls and that would have been devastating for me to be 0-3. If we had lost the Super Bowl, we would have been talked about as the team that couldn't win the big game."

Shula says the Perfect Season wasn't planned. It wasn't something he wrote on the bulletin board or constantly harped on. This opportunity of perfection just knocked at the door, and the Dolphins were willing to allow this stranger into their lives.

"We didn't go in with the idea of having a perfect record, but the next thing we know we're 8-0, 9-0," Shula says. "What we did then was try to keep everything in perspective. We knew we weren't going to win the next one because we won seven in a row or eight in a row. We just prepared for the next game."

Most of the 1972 Dolphins have plays that stand out as their most vivid memories. One of Shula's strongest recollections is of a decision he made in the game at Minnesota early in the year.

The Dolphins were trailing 14-6 midway into the fourth quarter when Shula had a choice: Either gamble on fourth down or ask Garo Yepremian to kick a career-best 51-yard field goal.

"I could have gone for it on fourth down with the idea of getting the seven points first," Shula says. "But instead I went for the field goal, got the three, and then we got the ball back and won the game on [Jim] Mandich's touchdown catch. That was obviously a critical time of the season for us."

No other NFL coach has accomplished more than Shula. Former Chicago Bears head coach George Halas has more career victories (325), but Shula should catch him by 1992 or 1993, provided he stays healthy and the Dolphins stay successful.

No other NFL coach has been in more Super Bowls (six, one with Baltimore); no one has reached the Super Bowl three consecutive years; no one has compiled a 32-2 record for a two-year-stretch.

Yet there is no debate in Shula's mind when he is asked what he considers his biggest achievement.

"It has to be the Perfect Season," he says. "To be able to win the Super Bowl, plus the added glory of winning all the games. . .that's something no other team has been able to do."

For Shula, this accomplishment is just another brick in his coaching wall—even if he hasn't yet had time to stand back and admire his work.

CLIFTON BOUTELLE

Quarterback Earl Morrall

In 1972, Earl Morrall was a 38-year-old backup quarterback who figured to be quietly coming to the end of a very successful NFL career. The 17-year pro had been claimed on waivers from Baltimore by the Dolphins before the season started, to serve as insurance behind Bob Griese.

But all that changed in the season's fifth game, when Griese broke his leg after being tackled by a pair of San Diego linemen.

"When I went into the huddle," he says today, "my only thought was to keep the drive going."

Morrall kept the Dolphins going, all right—all the way to 11 consecutive victories. He wasn't flashy or fancy, not exactly shocking for someone who still wore high-topped black shoes and a crew-cut, but he was effective.

Morrall certainly had the pedigree for such a job. He had taken over for the injured Johnny Unitas and led the Baltimore Colts to Super Bowl III four years earlier. Morrall was named the NFL's most valuable player that year (1968).

"Being older than most of the [Dolphins] players and having gone through the same experience, I think they accepted me right away," Morrall says. "What I tried to do was not come up with the big plays myself, but to just make sure the offense kept moving the football. I didn't want to get too excited . . .and it helped that our guys never got rattled."

Morrall's favorite memory from the Perfect Season was out of character with his conservative style.

The Dolphins were trailing the New York Jets 17-14 in the third quarter of the season's tenth game when Morrall, unable to spot an open receiver, suddenly tried his imitation of Fran Tarkenton. He lumbered down the sideline 31 yards for the touchdown that turned out to be the margin of victory.

"Believe me," Morrall says, "I was giving myself a pep talk the whole way."

Six weeks later, Don Shula was giving Morrall a

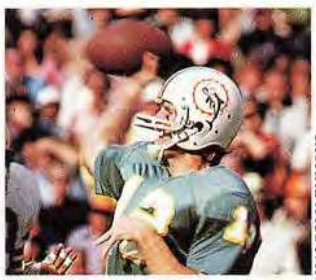
different kind of talk. Griese had come off the bench to rally the Dolphins to a 21-17 victory over Pittsburgh in the AFC Championship Game. Then Shula called Morrall into his office to tell him Griese would be the starter in Super Bowl VII.

It was a bitter blow for Morrall, who was the starter for Baltimore when Joe Namath "guaranteed" the victory over the Colts in Super Bowl III. The guy who had helped the Dolphins get to the ball suddenly was placed in a wallflower role.

"I told him [Shula] that I respected his opinion, but that I wanted to be a part of it, too," Morrall says. "It was very disappointing because I wanted to play in another Super Bowl after the loss to the Jets. I could have created waves, but I knew the important thing was to win the game."

Morrall, now 54 and the owner of the Arrowhead Country Club in Davie, Florida, still holds the distinction of having been the starting quarterback for six different NFL teams (the 49ers, Steelers, Lions, Giants, Colts, and Dolphins). But more people remember him for the relief job he did with the 1972 Dolphins than the starting jobs he had for the other five teams during his 21-year NFL career.

"It was a great feeling to be a part of that team, even though at the time I didn't understand the magnitude of it," Morrall says. "But after you get out, it's something that people still want to talk about. I'm just glad I had a chance to be a part of it."


MALCOLM EMMONS

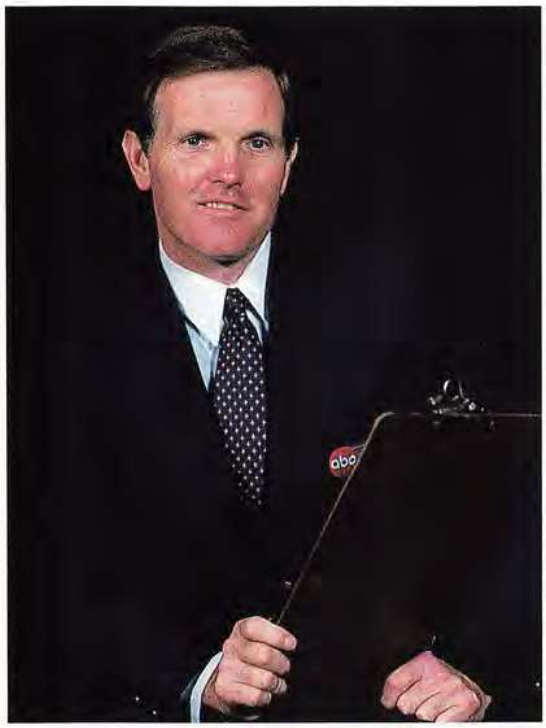
Quarterback Bob Griese

Bob Griese says he has compassion for every professional athlete who never had a chance to play in a Super Bowl, a World Series, an NBA Championship Series, or a Stanley Cup final.

"If you're a pro in a team sport, there's nothing that will ever replace the feeling of winning a championship," Griese says. "I feel badly for the guys who played professionally and never had that opportunity."

Yet Griese almost was dealt a worse fate. He was the starting quarterback who almost lost out on the opportunity to lead his team to a perfect record because of an injury.

Griese was injured on the fourteenth play of the fifth game of the year. San Diego defensive linemen Deacon Jones and Ron East sandwiched Griese as he was completing a pass to Jim Kiick. Griese suffered a broken leg and a dislocated ankle.



While the physical pain was tremendous, it paled compared to the mental anguish Griese felt as he watched journeyman veteran Earl Morrall come off the bench and lead the Dolphins to 11 consecutive victories. But Morrall's string finally ran out in the AFC Championship Game against Pittsburgh. The teams were tied 7-7 at halftime when Shula decided to go back to Griese.

"I knew I was close to being ready, and I knew if things didn't go well, coach Shula had enough confidence to put me back in," Griese says. "It did spark the team."

Shula's confidence paid off as Griese led the Dolphins to a 21-17 win. Two weeks later, Griese remained in the lineup when the Dolphins wrapped up the Perfect Season with the 14-7 victory over Washington in Super Bowl VII.

Still looking fit at 43, Griese admits he had mixed emotions late in the 1972 season. As a quar-

terback, he appreciated the job Morrall had done. But as a competitor, Griese couldn't help but want to be called by Shula.

"You have to give Earl a lot of credit because he got us there," Griese said. "But the highlight of the season for me was coming back after the injury. Otherwise, I wouldn't have had a lot of memories of the '72 season."

Fate has continued to deal Griese a mixed deck. He has become one of the top broadcasters in the country, serving as the analyst on ABC's top college football announcing team. He gets paid more than $500,000 a season for talking about the game he played for 22 years. But Griese lives with a heavy heart. Judi, his wife of 21 years, died last February after a long battle with breast cancer, leaving Griese to raise his three sons (Scott, Jeff, and Brian).

"It was a tough struggle for her," Griese says. "But we're doing fine, the boys and I. For those of us who believe in life after death, we know that someday we'll all be together again." Rather than think about the times they'll miss, Griese would prefer to remember the times they shared together. And so it is for Griese and the 1972 Dolphins.

JAMES F. FLORES

Wide Receiver Paul Warfield

Paul Warfield remembers the scene as if it happened yesterday. It was late in the afternoon at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, and the Miami Dolphins were in their huddle.

For more than six months, this team had lived, breathed, practiced, perspired, ached, eaten, slept, and done everything else a football team does together with a single thought in mind: to win the Super Bowl. Then, as the sun was setting on that Sunday afternoon of January 14, 1973, Warfield realized the moment of reckoning was at hand.

"I remember we were still standing in the huddle as the final seconds were counting down when I looked up at the big computer scoreboard and it was flashing, 'DOLPHINS ARE SUPER,' " Warfield says. "It was at that moment that I realized that all of our hard work and aspirations had paid off."

It wasn't until later—much later—that Warfield said he truly appreciated the fact the Dolphins also had become the first NFL team in modern-day history to be perfect.

"Our objective was not to go undefeated," Warfield says. "It was to get back to the Super Bowl and win it and prove we were a better team than we had shown against Dallas the year before. Our focus was so intense and our motivation so high that once we reached ten wins, we were never approached with the pressure of trying to maintain a streak."

It would have been easy for Warfield to be a disruptive force. One of the most gifted receivers ever to play the game—no less than a half-dozen of his teammates called him the best player they ever played with—Warfield spent most of the 1972 season as a decoy.

He averaged only two catches a game, more often using his hands to block downfield for the runners, Larry Csonka, Jim Kiick, and Mercury Morris.

"There were times I was frustrated," Warfield says. "When you're a thoroughbred, you want to run, you don't want to trot. But I had to understand that I was making a contribution if I only made one catch because the whole object in team sports is to win, and that's something we certainly did. I had great respect for coach Shula and his philosophy. I understood that what was best for the team was more important than what was best for Paul Warfield."

Warfield was one of the few Dolphins who spent the majority of his career elsewhere. He played five seasons for the Dolphins (1970-74), compared with eight for Cleveland (1964-69, 1976-77). But Warfield, whom the Dolphins obtained by trading away a first-round pick, feels no less a part of the Dolphins' successes than any other player.

"I wasn't for the trade, but it turned out to be one of the greatest things to happen to me," he says. "It would have been great to have started and finished my career with one team, but I don't think playing for Cleveland changed my perspective on playing

with the Dolphins. I'm very proud to have been a member of that team."

Warfield, now 46, remained in football for almost a decade in various capacities with the Browns. But two years ago he started a company in Ohio that assists people in finding personnel opportunities.

In other words, he's doing what he did for most of the '72 season—putting his own accomplishments on hold while helping others.

TONY TOMSIC

Fullback Larry Csonka

So many times when the Dolphins were in trouble, Shula called on fullback Larry Csonka, and Csonka delivered. So it surprised no one when Shula turned to Csonka again on the night of December 2, 1985.

The Chicago Bears were coming to Miami with a 12-0 record, posing the greatest threat yet to joining the Dolphins' exclusive group of one. This time, Zonk delivered a pregame speech instead of a critical four or five yards.

"They [the Dolphins] had to know something was up because I noticed a lot of old goats on the sideline that night," Csonka says of the other ex-Dolphins who were at the game. "I was concerned about it [the Bears going undefeated], but I didn't say anything specific about that to the players. They knew by our presence why we were there."

Csonka always had a way of making his presence felt, and that night was no different as the emotionally stirred Dolphins whipped the Bears 38-24 to preserve the 1972 team's spot in history.

Csonka remembers standing in another locker room in Miami 13 years earlier and hearing Shula give one of his beginning-of-training-camp speeches. Actually, Csonka was only half-listening to Shula. The part that caught his attention was when Shula started talking about an undefeated season.

"A lot of guys don't recall this, but I distinctly remember Shula saying we were going to take one game at a time and win them all," Csonka says. "I can remember [Jim] Kiick looking up and saying, 'What did he say?' When Shula said the part about winning them all, that raised my eyebrows, too."

Csonka was a major reason why the Dolphins were able to meet Shula's training-camp expectations. He led the team with 1,117 yards (a 5.2 average) and had 112 yards in the Super Bowl. If Bob Griese was the brains of the Dolphins during their Super Bowl days, Csonka was the heart and soul.

Now 42, Csonka hasn't lost his touch. He's still as subtle as a sledgehammer, whether he's giving an interview, making the rounds for Miller Lite, or gradually working back into a broadcast career.

Csonka finally got out of pro football in 1986 when the USFL folded. He had been the vice president of the Jacksonville Bulls. A year later, Csonka and center Jim Langer were inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

A consummate team player, Csonka still rates the perfect season as his career pinnacle, even over the personal thrill of making the Hall of Fame.

"When it happened it was something special," Csonka says. "And it gets even greater as the years go on and nobody else matches it."

It would be hard to match what Csonka supplied to the 1972 Dolphins. Whether it was getting the tough four yards on third down or pulling off the perfect practical joke in the locker room (he once put a live alligator in the shower with Shula), Csonka was the man for all seasons.

Ask Csonka to talk about his favorite memory of the '72 season, and he doesn't talk about plays or

'72 DOLPHINS: WHERE THEY ARE NOW

Here's an update on the undefeated 1972 Miami Dolphins—where they're living and what they're doing. The 40 players listed are those who dressed for Super Bowl VII:

PLAYER	POSITION	BIRTH-DATE	YEARS AS PRO	RESIDENCE, OCCUPATION
Dick Anderson	S	2/10/46	10	*Miami, Insurance/Politics/Electronics Distributor.*
Charlie Babb	S	2/4/50	8	*Naples, Florida, Construction.*
Larry Ball	LB	9/27/49	7	*Miami, High school football coach.*
Marlin Briscoe	WR	9/10/45	9	*Whereabouts unknown.*
Nick Buoniconti	LB	12/15/40	14	*Miami/Greenwich, Connecticut, President of U.S.T./HBO announcer.*
Doug Crusan	T	7/26/46	7	*Cincinnati, Vice President of Sales, Texo Corporation.*
Larry Csonka	FB	12/25/46	11	*Lisbon, Ohio/Jacksonville, Miller Lite representative.*
Vern Den Herder	DE	11/28/48	12	*Sioux City, Iowa, Owns farm.*
Norm Evans	T	9/28/42	14	*Seattle, Works with Pro Athletes Outreach.*
Manny Fernandez	DT	7/3/46	8	*Fort Lauderdale, Mortgage broker.*
Marv Fleming	TE	1/2/42	12	*Marina Del Rey, California, Sports agent.*
Tim Foley	CB	1/22/48	11	*Miami, WTBS announcer/Has Amway company.*
Hubert Ginn	RB	1/4/47	8	*Savannah, Georgia, Car salesman.*
Bob Griese	QB	2/3/45	14	*Miami, ABC announcer.*
Bob Heinz	DT	7/25/47	9	*Menlo Park, California, Advertising sales.*
Al Jenkins	G	7/15/46	4	*Columbus, Ohio, Manager of beer distributorship.*
Curtis Johnson	CB	6/22/48	9	*Toledo, Ohio, Fireman.*
Jim Kiick	RB	8/9/46	11	*Fort Lauderdale, Boat sales.*
Howard Kindig	T-C	6/22/41	9	*Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Real estate developer.*
Mike Kolen	LB	1/13/48	7	*Montgomery, Alabama, Real estate.*
Bob Kuechenberg	G	10/14/47	14	*Encino, California. Owner of travel agency/art collector.*
Jim Langer	C	5/16/48	12	*St. Cloud, Minnesota, Banker.*
Charles Leigh	RB	10/30/45	6	*Whereabouts unknown.*
Larry Little	G	11/2/45	14	*Daytona Beach, Florida, Bethune-Cookman football coach.*
Jim Mandich	TE	7/30/48	9	*Miami, Owns construction company/Radio announcer.*
Bob Matheson	LB	11/25/44	13	*Minneapolis, Assistant coach at University of Minnesota.*
Maulty Moore	DT	8/12/46	5	*Ft. Lauderdale, Works with county agency.*
Wayne Moore	T	8/17/45	9	*Miami, Runs cement company.*
Earl Morrall	QB	5/17/34	21	*Davie, Florida, Owns Arrowhead Country Club.*
Mercury Morris	RB	1/5/47	8	*Miami, Speaker.*
Lloyd Mumphord	CB	12/20/46	10	*Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Construction.*
Jesse Powell	LB	4/14/47	5	*Lubbock, Texas, Insurance salesman.*
Jake Scott	S	7/20/45	9	*Colorado/Hawaii, Investor.*
Larry Seiple	TE-P	2/14/45	11	*Miami, Dolphins assistant coach.*
Bill Stanfill	DE	1/13/47	8	*Albany, Georgia, Real estate.*
Otto Stowe	WR	2/25/49	4	*Santa Barbara, California, Teaches disabled.*
Doug Swift	LB	10/24/48	6	*Philadelphia, Anesthesiologist.*
Howard Twilley	WR	12/25/43	11	*Tulsa, Oklahoma, Owns clothing stores.*
Paul Warfield	WR	11/28/42	13	*Gahanna, Ohio, Runs professional services company.*
Garo Yepremian	K	6/2/44	14	*Miami, Owns car accessories business.*

situations. He talks about teammates and pride.

"Every week it was someone different who made the big play," he says. "Nobody was afraid to step forward and be the man. The thing we took the most pride in was that there didn't have to be one guy to carry the team."

Most of his teammates might politely disagree with Csonka. If he didn't carry this team, he certainly lifted it to another level.

JAMES E. FLORES

Linebacker Nick Buoniconti

The captain of the No-Name Defense almost became a no-show with the Dolphins.

Nick Buoniconti wasn't thrilled when he was traded from the Boston Patriots to the Dolphins before the 1969 season, especially when Miami owner Joe Robbie wouldn't give him a guaranteed three-year contract. So the six-time All-American Football League linebacker decided to retire. He even sent a retirement letter to Commissioner Pete Rozelle.

"I was serious about retiring, but then Robbie gave me a call and asked if I would come to Miami so we could talk about the contract one more time," Buoniconti says. "The next day I had my guaranteed three-year contract."

The rest, as they say, is history. Buoniconti went on to become the driving force behind the Dolphins' defense, the only *real* name among the group that gained fame as the No-Names.

"He was the leader," Shula says.

Leadership and Buoniconti never have been strangers since the days he was co-captain and an All-America at Notre Dame while playing both ways. The Dolphins' coaching staff recognized his leadership by naming him the defensive captain soon after his arrival.

Buoniconti claims his leadership wasn't needed most of the time.

"We didn't have to motivate each other," he says. "I distinctly remember after beating the Cleveland Browns in our first playoff game, the press came into the locker room as we were quietly undressing. Some of the reporters said we acted like we had just lost the game.

"My response to them was that we had only gotten part of the job done. I think that typified the attitude of the club. We handled every game in a business-like manner."

This approach has continued to serve Buoniconti well. Now 48, he's one of the most successful of the 1972 Dolphins. He splits his time as president of U.S.T., a subsidiary of U.S. Tobacco, and as co-host of HBO's popular "Inside the NFL" show.

Buoniconti appeared to have the perfect life until October 26, 1985, when his youngest son Marc was paralyzed while making a tackle for The Citadel football team. Ironically, the sport that had given so much to Buoniconti had taken away a precious commodity—his son's ability to lead a normal life. Buoniconti tries to keep the tragedy in perspective.

"My greatest highs and my greatest lows have come from football," Buoniconti says. "Obviously, that's a low point. But this hasn't deterred me. I still love the game. Marc's still alive. He's a great, vibrant kid, and we're all confident he's going to beat this."

After Marc's injury, Buoniconti again used his leadership to help start the Miami Project, a fund-raising organization that already has raised more than $8 million in an attempt to find a cure for paralysis.

"I'm a firm believer that things always happen for a reason," Buoniconti says. "Maybe that's why this happened, because of the success we've had raising money."

Leave it to Nick Buoniconti to turn one of life's biggest negatives into what may turn out to be a very positive thing for society. ◆

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Gold Medal Winner
Men's K 1–1,000 Meter
Kayaking Event
1988 Summer Games

Greg Barton, Norman Bellingham
Gold Medal Winners
Men's K 2–1,000 Meter
Kayaking Event
1988 Summer Games

Anne Marden
Silver Medal Winner
Women's Single Sculls
1988 Summer Games

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1988 REPLAY

◆

Week-by-Week Review of the Season in Words and Pictures

◆

By Jim Perry

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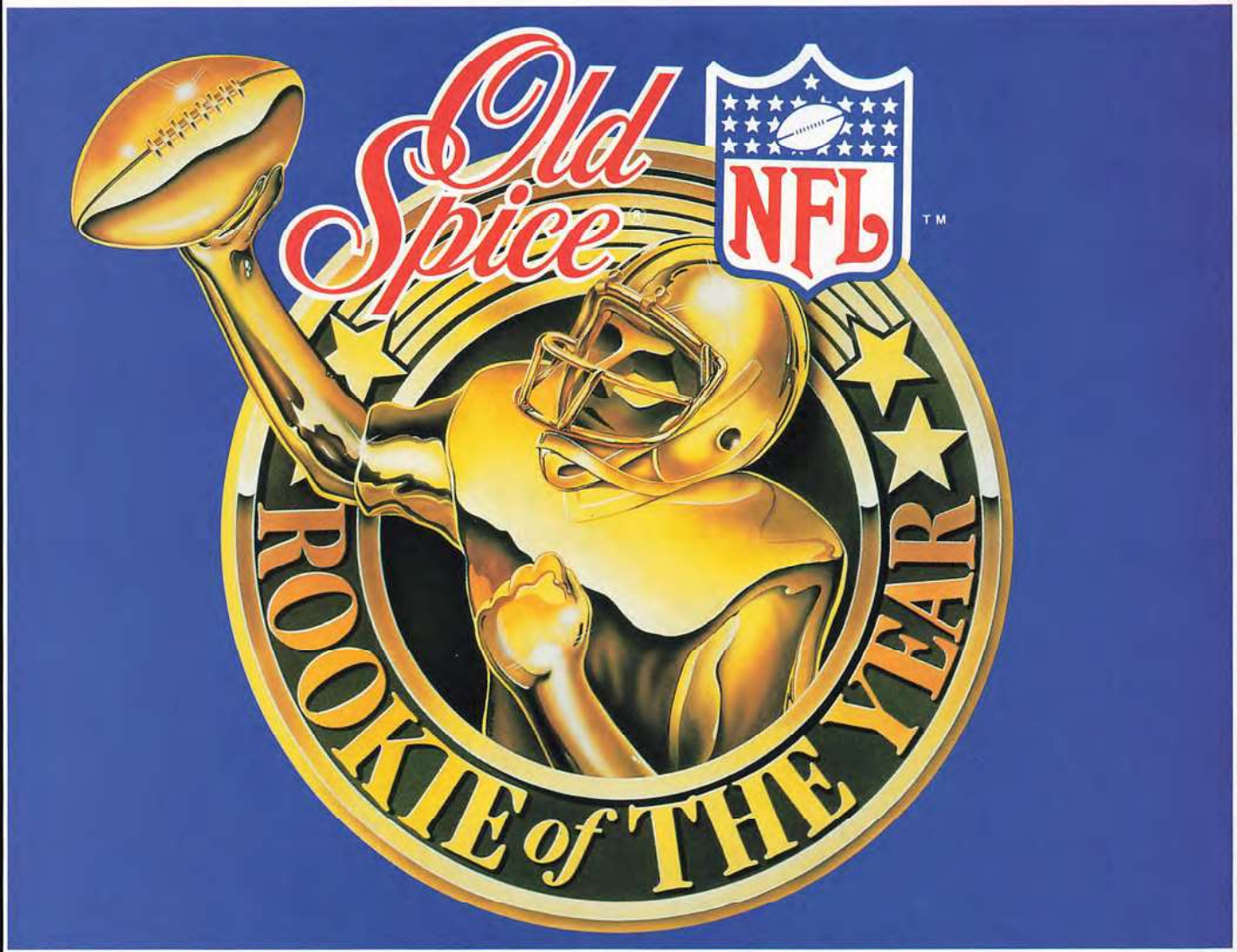

for another Championship Season

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1988 REPLAY

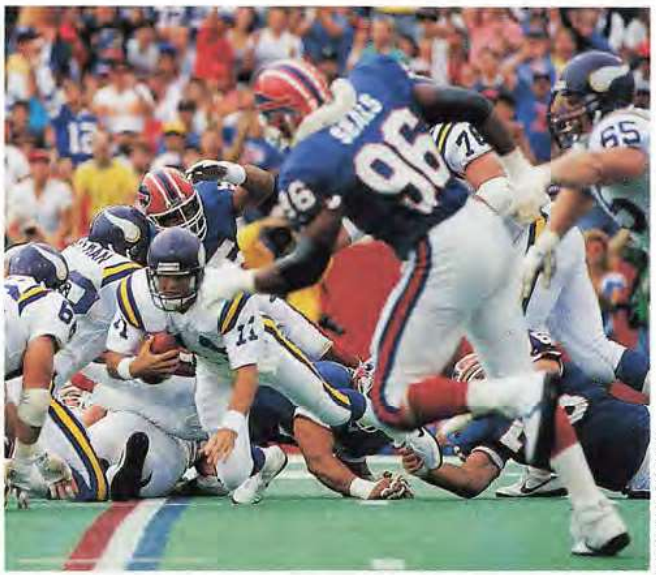
WEEK 1 SEPTEMBER 4

THE FIRST WEEKEND WAS a lost weekend for many of the game's best quarterbacks.

Cleveland's Bernie Kosar and Houston's Warren Moon were knocked out for several games with injuries to their passing arms, while Miami's Dan Marino and Denver's John Elway were healthy but gave poor performances.

San Francisco's Joe Montana was battered, too, leaving with a bruised elbow after throwing three touchdown passes, but the 49ers still pulled out a 34-33 victory over New Orleans.

Kosar and Moon were not as lucky. The Browns held on to nip Kansas City 6-3, but Kosar suffered a sprained elbow, which would sideline him for four to eight weeks.



ROBERT B. SHAVER

Buffalo won its first season opener since 1982 by beating Minnesota 13-10. The Bills came up with six sacks.

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	1	0	0
New England	1	0	0
Indianapolis	0	1	0
Miami	0	1	0
N.Y. Jets	0	1	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	1	0	0
Cleveland	1	0	0
Houston	1	0	0
Pittsburgh	1	0	0
AFC West			
L.A. Raiders	1	0	0
Seattle	1	0	0
Denver	0	1	0
Kansas City	0	1	0
San Diego	0	1	0

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	1	0	0
Philadelphia	1	0	0
Dallas	0	1	0
Phoenix	0	1	0
Washington	0	1	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	1	0	0
Detroit	1	0	0
Green Bay	0	1	0
Minnesota	0	1	0
Tampa Bay	0	1	0
NFC West			
L.A. Rams	1	0	0
San Francisco	1	0	0
Atlanta	0	1	0
New Orleans	0	1	0

SCORES

AFC
Cleveland 6, Kansas City 3
Houston 17, Indianapolis 14 (OT)
L.A. Raiders 24, San Diego 13
New England 28, N.Y. Jets 3
Seattle 21, Denver 14

NFC
Detroit 31, Atlanta 17
L.A. Rams 34, Green Bay 7
N.Y. Giants 27, Washington 20
Philadelphia 41, Tampa Bay 14
San Francisco 34, New Orleans 33

Interconference
Buffalo 13, Minnesota 10
Chicago 34, Miami 7
Cincinnati 21, Phoenix 14
Pittsburgh 24, Dallas 21

Houston edged Indianapolis 17-14 in overtime, but Moon went to the locker room with a broken bone in his shoulder that would cost him four to six weeks.

"Obviously, I'm disappointed to have this injury at this time," Moon said. "When it happened, I thought it was a bruise, but the x rays showed a fracture."

The Browns needed all of their depth, because six starters came out of the game with injuries, although Kosar was the only one seriously hurt.

Gary Danielson, an 11-year veteran, completed 18 of 29 passes against the Chiefs and directed 81- and 72-yard drives to field goals. Matt Bahr kicked the first with no time left in the first half, and the 38-yard game winner with 25 seconds to play.

Moon was replaced by second-year quarterback Cody Carlson with the score tied 14-14. Houston then turned conservative as Mike Rozier rushed for 100 yards and Allen Pinkett added 63.

The Oilers' defense took over on the first play of overtime. Eric Dickerson of the Colts, who rushed for 109 yards, fumbled when hit by linebacker John Grimsley—and Oilers linebacker Robert Lyles recovered at the Indianapolis 42.

On third-and-13, Carlson passed 21 yards to Drew Hill for a first down on the 24. Tony Zendejas won it with a 35-yard field goal.

Perhaps the most impressive winner the first week was Chicago. The Bears lost Pro Bowl linebacker Otis Wilson to knee surgery before the regular season—and this on top of the loss of Pro Bowl linebacker Wilber Marshall to the Redskins through free agency, the retirement of all-time NFL leading rusher Walter Payton, and the trade of wide receiver Willie Gault.

The Bears reacted by pulverizing Miami 34-7—their first victory against the Dolphins in five tries.

"We like our people, we have a good team, and I don't care what others think," head coach Mike Ditka said. "We're going to play good, old-fashioned Bears football. We're going to run—and pass when we have to."

The old-fashioned Bears rushed for 262 yards, 124 by Neal Anderson, and controlled the ball for more than 45 of the game's 60 minutes. They outgained the Dolphins 427-163 and had 28 first downs to 10 for Miami. Jim McMahon passed for 172 yards and scored twice, and defensive end Richard Dent set up a touchdown with a fumble recovery on the Miami 1. The Bears' defense held

QUOTE

Giants linebacker **Gary Reasons,** analyzing 260-pound teammate Jim Burt's 39-yard touchdown run with a fumble against the Redskins:

"I was lying there watching him and I was afraid he might trip over a yard line."

MARV RUBIN

Buddy, Can You Spare a Drive?

As year three of the Buddy Era dawned, the Philadelphia Eagles appeared ready to take off.

They went 7-5 in non-strike games in 1987, and opened 1988 with an eased-up 41-14 defeat of Tampa Bay on the road. The score was 34-0 at halftime, which nearly prompted outspoken head coach Buddy Ryan to do cartwheels.

"It was the best half of football I've ever seen or been associated with," Ryan said.

The Eagles' offense scored on six of seven first-half possessions, while the defense set up touchdowns with two of its five interceptions off Tampa Bay quarterback Vinny Testaverde. Linebacker Seth Joyner and safety Terry Hoage had the big interceptions. Hoage had a busy day, which included another interception and a 38-yard touchdown run on a fake punt in the third quarter.

BOB ROSATO

Cunningham (right) and Quick were productive.

Ryan also was enthusiastic about fourth-year quarterback Randall Cunningham, who passed for 156 yards and two touchdowns in the first half, then rested the second half.

"Randall was able to do things," Ryan said, "and what he did makes us a super team."

What Randall did was throw a 37-yard touchdown pass to Mike Quick in the game's third minute, throw a 53-yard pass to Quick to set up another touchdown, fire an eight-yard scoring pass to rookie tight end Keith Jackson, and run two yards for a fourth touchdown.

"I've never been pulled out in a game like that before," Cunningham said, "but I'd go along with it every week if it meant we were winning."

Marino to a career-low 9 completions in 22 attempts.

In Denver, Seattle sacked Elway three times, intercepted him twice, and deflected six passes in a 21-14 victory.

ROD HANNA

John L. Williams ran for 79 yards to pace the Seahawks.

Cornerback Melvin Jenkins stole a pass on the second play of the second half and returned it 20 yards to the Broncos' 6. Dave Krieg followed with a three-yard touchdown pass to Ray Butler. Krieg later threw a 14-yard scoring pass to Curt Warner.

In New Orleans, the 49ers trailed the Saints 17-10 at halftime, but Montana got hot. In just 7:58 of the third quarter, he threw three touchdown passes—two to tight end John Frank and one to wide receiver Mike Wilson—for a 31-17 lead.

There was one statistical disappointment for the 49ers. Jerry Rice had his NFL-record 13-game touchdown-reception streak snapped. For the Saints, Bobby Hebert threw four touchdown passes to four different receivers.

At Buffalo, former Chiefs defensive end Art Still had 2½ sacks as the Bills surprised the Vikings 13-10. Buffalo sacked Wade Wilson six times. Bills rookie Thurman Thomas ran for 86 yards and a touchdown.

In Giants Stadium, where the last two Super Bowl winners met in the season's first Monday night game, the Redskins dominated the Giants in the first half, 13-3. Then the New York defense and special teams took over, and the Giants scored 24 unanswered points to win 27-20.

Joe Morris scored from the 9 after a short punt. Phil McConkey returned another punt 35 yards to set up a field goal by Raul Allegre. Linebacker Gary Reasons blocked a punt by Steve Cox after a bad snap, and safety Tom Flynn returned it 27 yards to score. After Redskins quarterback Doug Williams was blindsided by linebacker Pepper Johnson, nose tackle Jim Burt caught Williams's fumble and ran 39 yards to score.

In Los Angeles, the city had a record-equaling 110-degree day, but the Raiders shrugged off the heat to stop the Chargers 24-13. Rookie Tim Brown returned a kickoff 97 yards for a score, and the Raiders' defense sacked San Diego quarterback Babe Laufenberg five times. ♦

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

MICHAEL HEINZ

Cincinnati's Esiason

RON VESELY

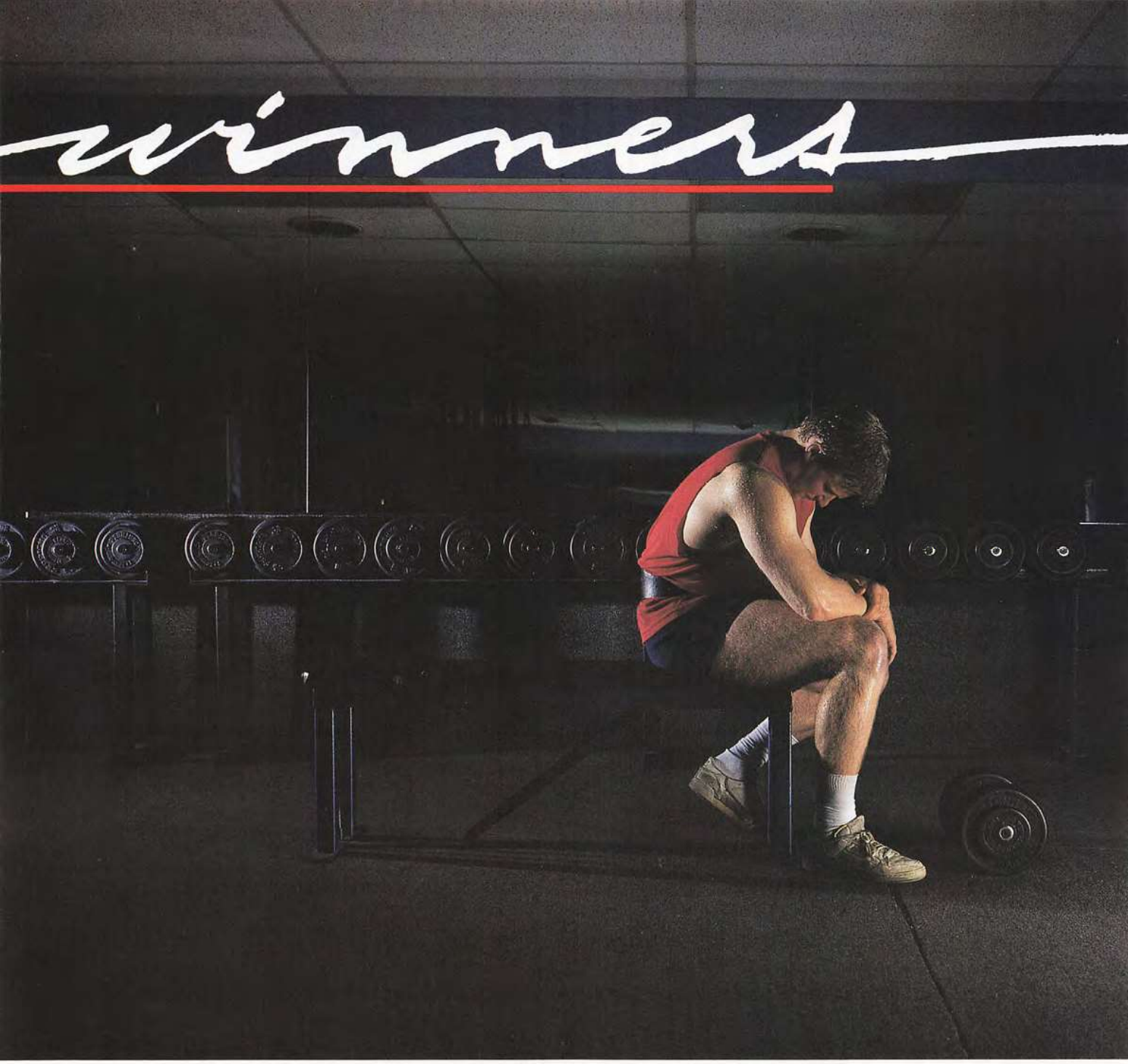
Chicago's Anderson

AFC OFFENSE—Boomer Esiason, quarterback, Cincinnati
Esiason completed 17 of 26 passes for 271 yards and three touchdowns in the Bengals' 21-14 victory over Phoenix. Included was a 61-yard bomb to wide receiver Eddie Brown, who caught six passes for 143 yards.

AFC DEFENSE—Ray Childress, defensive end, Houston
Childress had six tackles, including two of the Oilers' five sacks of Gary Hogeboom, and forced a fumble in Houston's 17-14 overtime victory over Indianapolis.

NFC OFFENSE—Neal Anderson, running back, Chicago
Anderson ran for 124 yards and two touchdowns and caught a pair of passes as the Bears routed Miami 34-7.

NFC DEFENSE—Michael Carter, nose tackle, San Francisco
Carter had six tackles, including two sacks, an interception that broke up a drive, a pass deflection, and a forced fumble that led to the clinching field goal as the 49ers won an opening-week showdown over rival New Orleans 34-33.



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WEEK 2 SEPTEMBER 11

THE 49ERS WERE IN trouble with less than a minute left. Trailing the Giants 17-13, they were on their own 22, it was third-and-12, and the Giants Stadium crowd was drowning out their signals. Other than that, everything was fine.

They responded by sending four receivers deep, including Jerry Rice, who flew down the right sideline and got a step on cornerback Mark Collins. Joe Montana fired the ball to Rice. Collins and safety Kenny Hill collided, and Rice went 78 yards for a touchdown with 42 seconds left. The 49ers stayed unbeaten with a 20-17 victory.

PRM

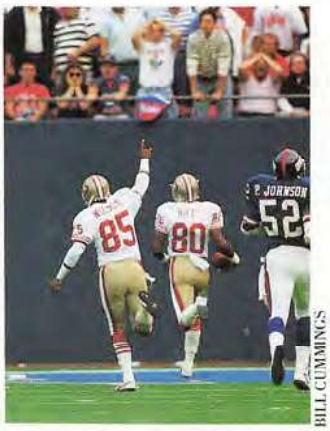
NFL football arrived in Phoenix, but so did the Dallas Cowboys, who beat the Cardinals 17-14.

"Just like we planned," Montana said straight-faced.

"When Joe threw the ball, I didn't blink, I didn't do nothing," said Rice, who had dropped two passes earlier in the game. "I wanted to make sure I caught it. If I had dropped that one, I would've stayed here in New York."

The depressed Collins sat on the Giants' bench for 10 minutes after the game. "The guy didn't make a play all day, then he does it on the last one," Collins said. "I thought I had him covered. It was a perfectly thrown ball."

The Giants thought *they* had won just seconds earlier, when Phil Simms threw his second touchdown pass of the game to Lionel Manuel, a perfect 15-yard lob into the left corner of the end zone.



BILL CUMMINGS

The latest last-minuted miracle by Joe Montana and Jerry Rice left the Giants stunned and beaten 20-17.

QUOTE

Bills nose tackle **Fred Smerlas**, discussing his team's 9-6 defeat of Miami:

"It wasn't pretty, but this isn't a beauty contest."

MARV RUBIN

But it was a day for last-minute heroics. Three other teams—Washington, Houston, and Tampa Bay—won in the last 60 seconds, and Cincinnati saved its victory with time running out.

At Houston, the Oilers, minus injured quarterback Warren Moon and leading rusher Mike Rozier, outscored the Raiders, who were banged up, too. Raiders quarterback Steve Beuerlein threw three scoring passes in the second quarter, and Los Angeles jumped to a 21-7 lead, then 28-14, and, finally, 35-31.

But Cody Carlson—making his first NFL start—Ernest Givins, and Allen Pinkett kept bringing the Oilers back. Carlson passed for 276

Tony D.'s in the Passing Lane

PAUL JASIENSKI

Dorsett still is cruising after all these years.

Late in the second quarter in Denver, Tony Dorsett darted six yards around left end to the San Diego Chargers' 21-yard line. It was a historic run, pushing the 34-year-old Dorsett past Franco Harris and into third place on the NFL's all-time rushing list.

Dorsett finished the afternoon with his first 100-yard game as a Bronco (113 on 23 carries) and a career total of 12,181 yards (Harris had 12,120). Next up, in second place, is Hall of Fame great Jim Brown, just 131 yards ahead at 12,312.

"When I catch Jim Brown I'll be a happy man," Dorsett said later. "When you're a running back and people start making comparisons between you and other backs, Jim Brown is always the one they point to."

Traded to Denver from Dallas in June, Dorsett said he was adjusting to life as a Bronco.

"I'm getting more relaxed and more familiar with the people," he said. "As the weeks go by, you get more and more comfortable.

"This is a great experience for me. It's a second life. It has me all excited again about football. My attitude has changed, my personality has changed."

It's also healthy for the Broncos, who have needed more punch in their running game for years. On the next play after he passed Harris, Dorsett took a handoff from John Elway and turned right end for 21 more yards—and a touchdown.

yards and two touchdowns, Givins had nine catches, and Pinkett ran for three scores as Houston won 38-35. Victory came with 31 seconds left, when Carlson, operating against a Raiders secondary minus two starters, produced a 79-yard march ending with Pinkett's six-yard sweep.

Houston defensive end William Fuller sacked Beuerlein three times. Raiders defensive end Howie Long forced a fumble to set up a touchdown, then batted a pass, intercepted it, and returned it 73 yards to set up another.

In Washington, the Redskins were in danger of starting the season 0-2 when they trailed Pittsburgh 29-20 in the fourth quarter.

But Doug Williams, who passed for 430 yards, threw a short touchdown pass to Kelvin Bryant with 4:48 left, and then directed a 43-yard drive that put rookie Chip Lohmiller in position for a game-winning 19-yard field goal with 12 seconds to go. Washington won 30-29. Ricky Sanders caught five passes for 145 yards, including a 55-yard bomb from Williams.

Pittsburgh's rapidly improving Bubby Brister passed for 258 yards, including an 80-yard scoring strike to Louis Lipps and one of 72 yards to running back Dwight Stone.

"It was frustrating to come so close and have one taken away from us," Brister said. "They may be the Super Bowl champions, but we didn't care. We knew we could play with them."

Tampa Bay defeated Green Bay 13-10 on Donald Igwebuike's 28-yard field goal as time ran out. The kick also snapped the Buccaneers' nine-game regular-season losing streak. Igwebuike also kicked a 53-yard field goal, and James Wilder ran for 91 yards.

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

BRIAN DRAKE

Seahawks' Jacob Green

PAUL SPINELLI/NFLP

Rams' Mike Wilcher

AFC OFFENSE—Tony Dorsett, running back, Denver
Dorsett ran for 113 yards and scored on a 21-yard run as the Broncos riddled San Diego 34-3. With 12,181 yards, Dorsett moved into third place on the all-time NFL rushing list.
AFC DEFENSE—Jacob Green, defensive end, Seattle
Green had three of Seattle's six sacks of Bill Kenney and Steve DeBerg in the Seahawks' 31-10 rout of Kansas City. On one sack of Kenney, Green forced a fumble and recovered it in the end zone for a touchdown—just 14 seconds after a previous Seattle touchdown.
NFC OFFENSE—Roger Craig, running back, San Francisco
Craig ran for 110 yards and caught 9 passes for 69 more in the 49ers' come-from-behind 20-17 defeat of the Giants.
NFC DEFENSE—Mike Wilcher, linebacker, Los Angeles Rams
Wilcher had six tackles, including 1½ sacks, and carried a lateral from linebacker Carl Ekern, who had recovered a fumble, to the Detroit 5 to set up a touchdown as the Rams stopped the Lions 17-10.

CHRIS SCHWENK

The New York Jets gained 402 yards and controlled the ball for 37:47 in a 23-3 victory over Cleveland.

In a statistical oddity, Packers quarterback Randy Wright completed all 13 of his passes in the second half, but his team did not score in the last three quarters.

The hottest quarterback in the NFL was Cincinnati's Boomer Esiason, who passed for 363 yards and four touchdowns in the Bengals' 28-24 victory at Philadelphia. It gave him seven scoring passes in two weeks.

"Our offensive line did a great job," Esiason said. So did Tim McGee and James Brooks, who caught two touchdown passes apiece. McGee's first was a 78-yard bomb, his second a 3-yard game-winner with 5:02 left.

The Eagles' Randall Cunningham, who passed for 261 yards and ran for 85, drove his team to the Cincinnati 11 in the last minute, but his fourth-down pass fell incomplete with 26 seconds left.

The Browns, who lost quarterback Bernie Kosar for several games with a sprained elbow in week 1, were jolted again when backup Gary Danielson broke his left ankle against the Jets at Cleveland. Third-team quarterback Mike Pagel finished up, and the Jets, behind Ken O'Brien's 256 yards passing, finished the Browns 23-3.

In Indianapolis, the Bears held their second successive opponent under 200 yards, limiting the Colts to 173 in a 17-13 victory.

With 5:30 left and a chance to win, the Colts' Eric Dickerson made his second costly fumble in two weeks. Linebacker Ron Rivera hit him, and tackle Steve McMichael took the ball out of his hands at the Bears' 37.

Charles White, the NFL's leading rusher in 1987, was serving a 30-day suspension, but the Rams gave the ball to Greg Bell 27 times, and he ran for 139 yards in a 17-10 victory over the Lions.

Rams safety Johnnie Johnson made the game's critical play. With his team trailing 10-7, Johnson stole the ball from wide receiver Gary Lee at the Rams' 3, and the Rams drove to the tying field goal. ♦

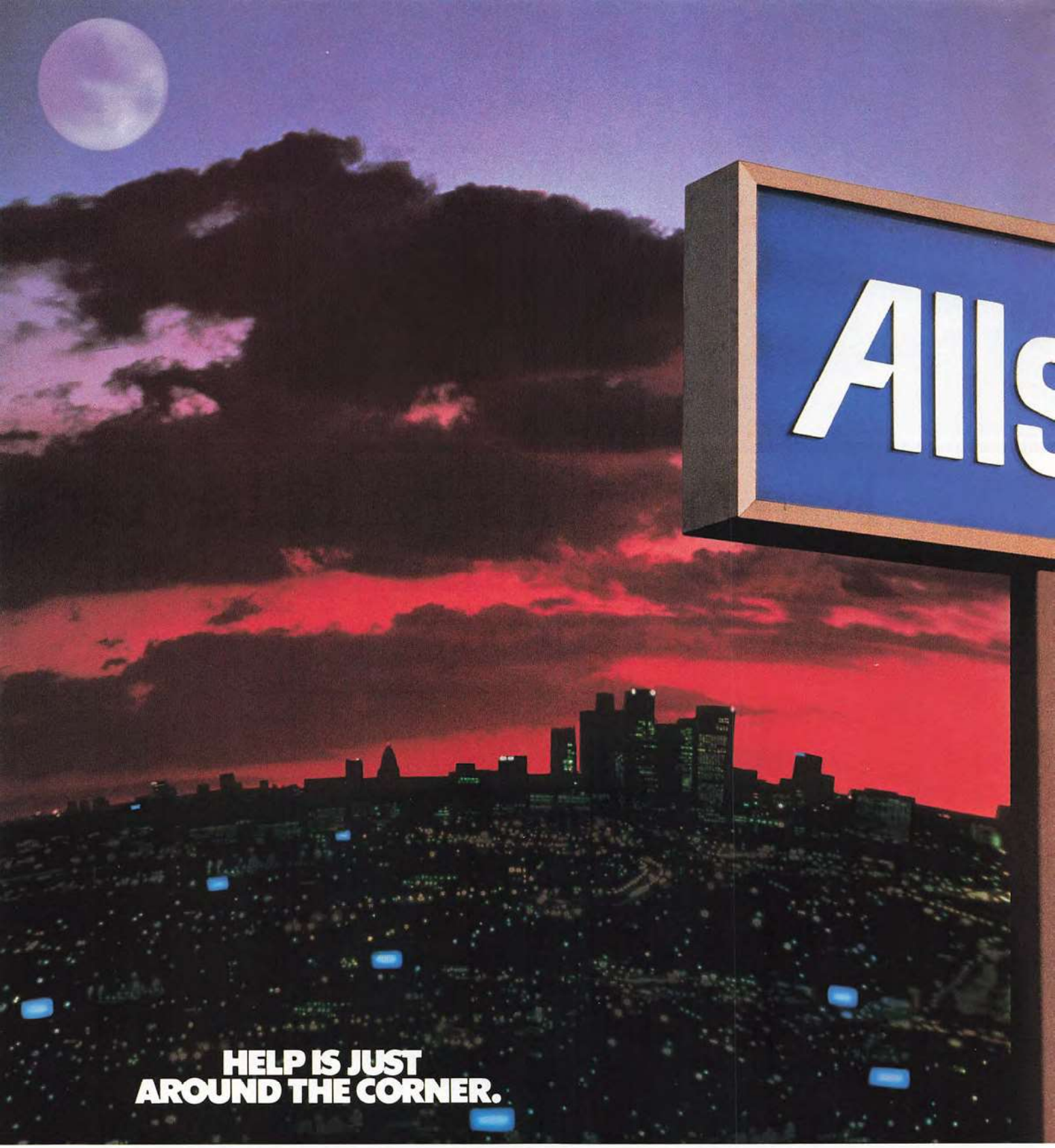
STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	2	0	0
New England	1	1	0
N.Y. Jets	1	1	0
Indianapolis	0	2	0
Miami	0	2	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	2	0	0
Houston	2	0	0
Cleveland	1	1	0
Pittsburgh	1	1	0
AFC West			
Seattle	2	0	0
Denver	1	1	0
L.A. Raiders	1	1	0
Kansas City	0	2	0
San Diego	0	2	0

NFC East	W	L	T
Dallas	1	1	0
N.Y. Giants	1	1	0
Philadelphia	1	1	0
Washington	1	1	0
Phoenix	0	2	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	2	0	0
Detroit	1	1	0
Minnesota	1	1	0
Tampa Bay	1	1	0
Green Bay	0	2	0
NFC West			
L.A. Rams	2	0	0
San Francisco	2	0	0
New Orleans	1	1	0
Atlanta	0	2	0

SCORES

AFC
Buffalo 9, Miami 6
Denver 34, San Diego 3
Houston 38, L.A. Raiders 35
N.Y. Jets 23, Cleveland 3
Seattle 31, Kansas City 10
NFC
Dallas 17, Phoenix 14
L.A. Rams 17, Detroit 10
New Orleans 29, Atlanta 21
San Francisco 20, N.Y. Giants 17
Tampa Bay 13, Green Bay 10
Intereconference
Chicago 17, Indianapolis 13
Cincinnati 28, Philadelphia 24
Minnesota 36, New England 6
Washington 30, Pittsburgh 29



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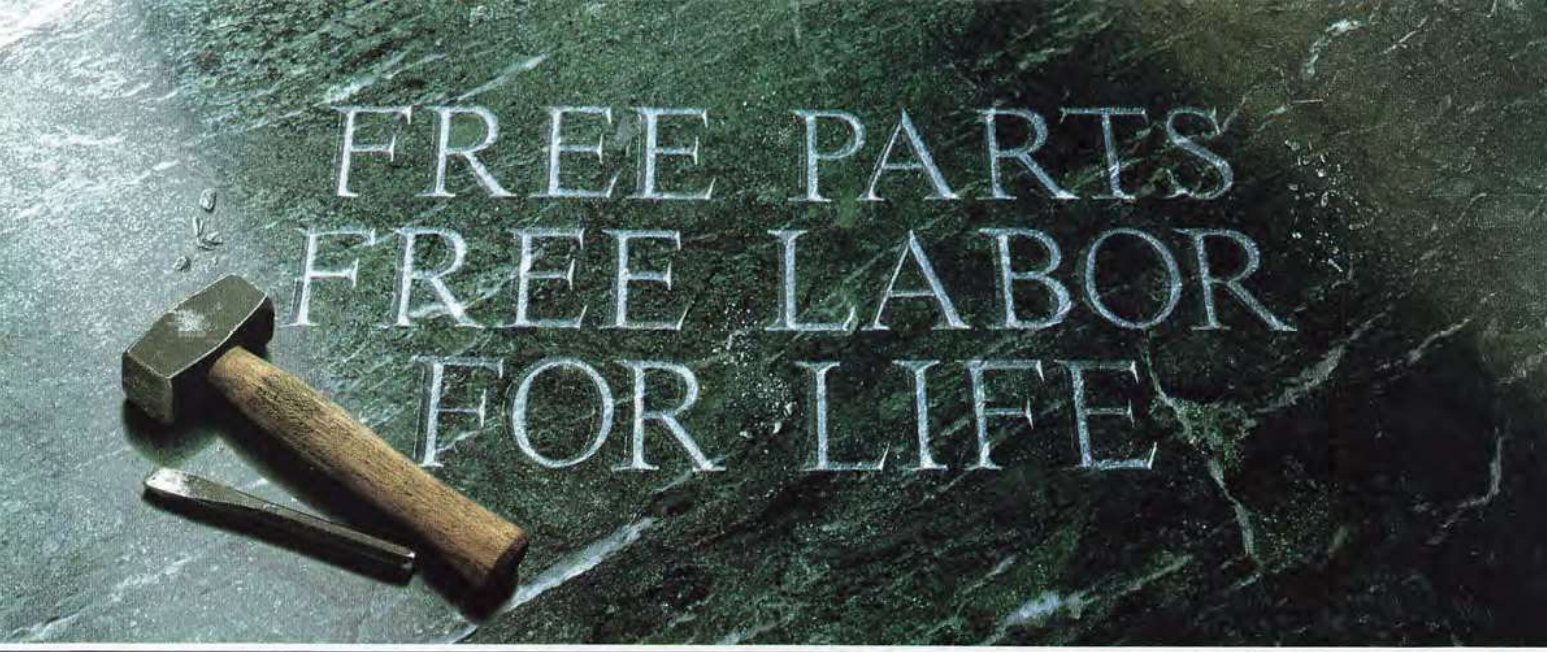

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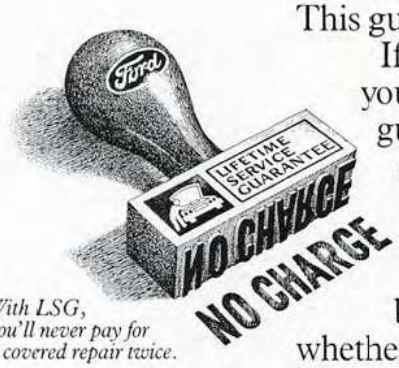

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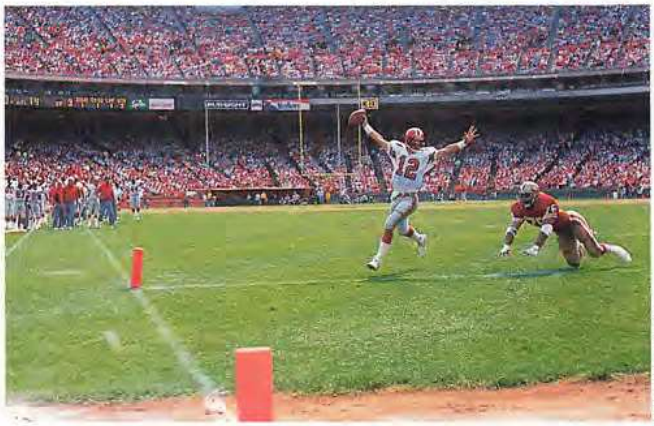
WEEK 3 SEPTEMBER 18



OWEN C. SHAW

Chris Miller's one-yard keeper made it 21-3, and underdog Atlanta never looked back in a 34-17 victory.

IN THE THIRD WEEK OF the season, the meek inherited the NFL.

Three last-place teams in 1987—the Falcons, Jets, and Chiefs—were among those pulling a series of surprises as four unbeaten teams fell in the same weekend. The three biggest stunners occurred in San Francisco, where the Falcons upended the 49ers; in San Diego, where the Chargers shocked the Seahawks; and in the Meadowlands, where the Jets overwhelmed the Oilers 45-3. All three losers had started the season 2-0.

The carnage continued in Chicago, where it wasn't a big surprise that Minnesota defeated the previously unbeaten Bears. But 31-7? And, finally, in Kansas City, the Chiefs snapped their winless streak by handing defending AFC champion Denver its second loss.

In San Francisco, the 49ers had an 18-2 record in their last 20 regular-season games. But winless Atlanta, behind 179 yards rushing and receiving from Gerald Riggs, outscored them 21-0 in the second quarter and went on to win 34-17.

"We had a lot of respect for Atlanta going into the game," 49ers head coach Bill Walsh said. "I guess we needed more."

The 49ers' Joe Montana passed for 343 yards and two touchdowns, but he also was intercepted three times. Safety Robert Moore returned one of them 47 yards for a touchdown. Atlanta rookie James Primus chipped in with a 29-yard touchdown run.

In San Diego, the Chargers defeated Seattle 17-6, after losing eight regular-season games in a row and seven games in a row to the Seahawks.

"We were out of sync all day," Seahawks head coach Chuck Knox said.

The Chargers started fast, when end Tyrone Keys tipped a pass by Dave Krieg early in the first quarter. Linebacker Keith Browner grabbed the ball and returned it 55 yards for a touchdown and a 7-0 lead. In all, the Chargers intercepted Krieg and backup Jeff Kemp four times. Browner and cornerback Gill Byrd had two each. San Diego's Gary Anderson rushed for 120 yards, including a 25-yard touchdown run that clinched the game with 4:05 left.

To make the day a total loss for Seattle, Krieg suffered a separated shoulder in his passing arm and was expected to be out for six to eight weeks.

It was no consolation, but the Seahawks' Steve Largent caught four passes for 71 yards to pass Charlie Joiner and become the all-time NFL leader in career receiving yards with 12,167.

At the Meadowlands, the Jets, who upended the Browns 23-3 the week before, treated the Oilers even worse in their 45-3 victory. Ken O'Brien passed for 260 yards and three touchdowns, and backup Pat Ryan threw another scoring pass. Wesley Walker caught three of their four touchdown passes.

The Jets also had five sacks and three interceptions against Cody Carlson and Brent Pease, who were replacing the injured Warren Moon. Jets head coach Joe Walton, who had overhauled the team during the offseason, was ecstatic.

"Some people say young players can't win, but I think they can," he said.

In Chicago, the Bears lost defensive end William Perry with a broken arm and lost the game 31-7 to the Vikings. They had defeated Minnesota in eight of their previous nine meetings.

The Vikings' Tommy Kramer, who regained his starting job from Wade Wilson, passed for 258 yards

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	3	0	0
N.Y. Jets	2	1	0
Miami	1	2	0
New England	1	2	0
Indianapolis	0	3	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	3	0	0
Cleveland	2	1	0
Houston	2	1	0
Pittsburgh	1	2	0
AFC West			
Seattle	2	1	0
Denver	1	2	0
Kansas City	1	2	0
L.A. Raiders	1	2	0
San Diego	1	2	0

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	2	1	0
Washington	2	1	0
Dallas	1	2	0
Philadelphia	1	2	0
Phoenix	1	2	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	2	1	0
Minnesota	2	1	0
Detroit	1	2	0
Tampa Bay	1	2	0
Green Bay	0	3	0
NFC West			
L.A. Rams	3	0	0
New Orleans	2	1	0
San Francisco	2	1	0
Atlanta	1	2	0

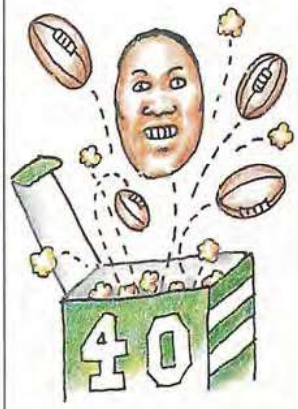
SCORES

AFC
Buffalo 16, New England 14
Cincinnati 17, Pittsburgh 12
Cleveland 23, Indianapolis 17
Kansas City 20, Denver 13
N.Y. Jets 45, Houston 3
San Diego 17, Seattle 6

NFC
Atlanta 34, San Francisco 17
Minnesota 31, Chicago 7
New Orleans 22, Detroit 14
N.Y. Giants 12, Dallas 10
Phoenix 30, Tampa Bay 24
Washington 17, Philadelphia 10

Interconference
L.A. Rams 22, L.A. Raiders 17
Miami 24, Green Bay 17

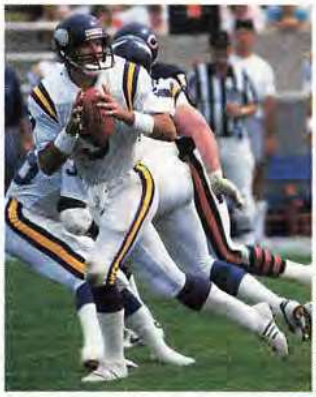
QUOTE



MARV RUBIN

Jets rookie cornerback **James Hasty**, after his team's stunning 45-3 defeat of Houston:

"I'm beginning to feel like a Cracker Jack toy the way people are talking about us being 2-1—like it's a big surprise."


VERNON J. BIEVER

Kramer came out firing.

(208 in the first half) and three touchdowns, including 40- and 16-yard strikes to wide receiver Anthony Carter.

"Tommy Kramer, when he's hot, just bursts into flames," said Bears defensive tackle Dan Hampton.

Minnesota linebacker Chris Martin recovered Dennis McKinnon's fumbled punt in the end zone for one touchdown, and tackle Keith Millard's recovery of a fumble by Jim McMahon set up another.

The wave of upsets reduced the list of unbeaten teams to three—Buffalo and Cincinnati in the AFC, and the Los Angeles Rams in the NFC.

The Bills scored only 38 points in their first three games, but their defense allowed only 30, and they reached 3-0 with a last-minute 16-14 defeat of New England. With 1:50 left in the game, the Bills trailed 14-13, but Jim Kelly, who completed 14 of his last 16 passes (one of the misses was a throwaway), directed a 29-yard drive to set up Scott Norwood's third field goal of the game, a 41-yard effort that won it with 11 seconds left.

In Los Angeles, the Rams sacked Steve Beuerlein nine times, including five by end Gary Jeter, and beat the Raiders 22-17.

In 1988, the Minute Waltz Is a Happy Dance in Cincinnati

GEORGE GOJKOVICH

Boomer riding high

In 1987 the Cincinnati Bengals lost four games in the last two minutes. The late collapses destroyed a promising season, and the Bengals finished last in the AFC Central Division.

Quarterback Boomer Esiason shook his head in disbelief after one particularly depressing loss. "Maybe we need an exorcist," he said.

After three weeks of the new season, however, the formerly snake-bitten Bengals were one of three unbeaten teams in the NFL. And, in a complete reversal from 1987, their defense had saved all three games in the last minute.

"Three wins in a row and three close ones in a row," head coach Sam Wyche said. "I'm getting used to this. But I've got a pacemaker on order."

In the latest chapter of the Cardiac Kids, the Bengals outlasted Pittsburgh 17-12 when Cincinnati cornerback Eric Thomas intercepted a pass by Steelers quarterback Bubby Brister at the Bengals' 8 with less than a minute left to play.

The week before, in the last minute of a game against Philadelphia, Thomas broke up two successive passes in the end zone to wide receiver Mike Quick with the Eagles trailing by four points.

And, in week one, the Bengals' defense stuffed the Cardinals four straight times after Phoenix had a first-and-goal at the Cincinnati 1 with 1:15 left, trailing 21-14.

On offense, Esiason was the NFL's leading passer.

"I'm very happy right now," Esiason said. "But I've seen teams start 3-0 and totally fizzle. We've still got a lot of work to do because it's a very long season."

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

AL MESSERSCHMIDT

Chiefs' Steve DeBerg

PETER BROUILLET

Falcons' Gerald Riggs

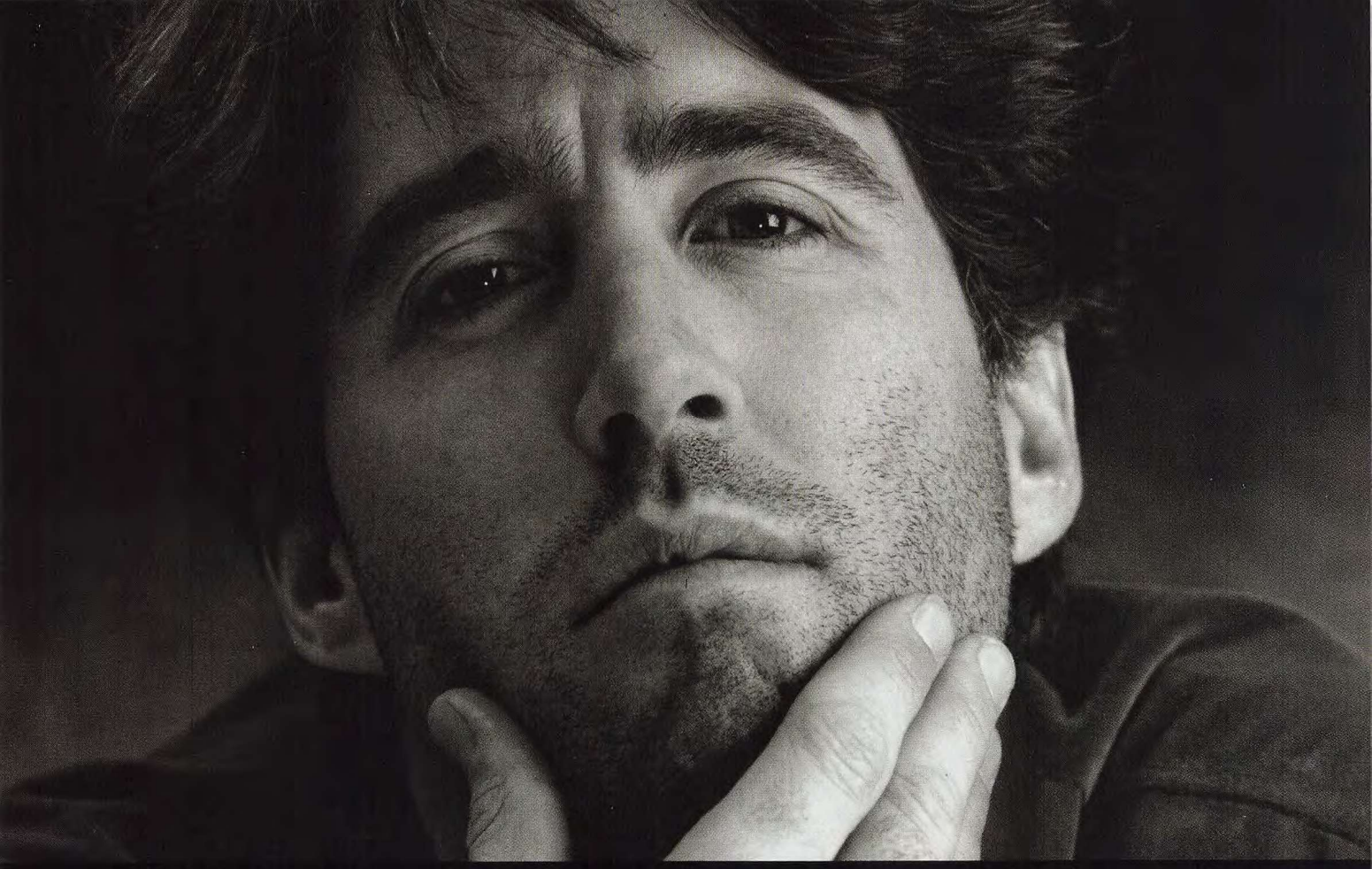
AFC OFFENSE—Steve DeBerg, quarterback, Kansas City
DeBerg made his first start for the Chiefs, passing for 259 yards and two touchdowns as Kansas City stopped Denver 20-13. One of his touchdown passes went to running back Paul Palmer, who ran for 80 yards and caught seven passes for 84 more.
AFC DEFENSE—Bobby Humphery, cornerback, New York Jets
Humphery broke up six passes, made three tackles, had one quarterback pressure, and recovered a fumble on the Jets' 9-yard line in New York's 45-3 surprise of Houston.
NFC OFFENSE—Gerald Riggs, running back, Atlanta
Riggs ran for 115 yards and a touchdown and caught four passes for 64 yards in Atlanta's 34-17 surprise of San Francisco.
NFC DEFENSE—Gary Jeter, defensive end, Los Angeles Rams
Jeter had a team-record five sacks as the Rams sacked Steve Beuerlein nine times and defeated the Raiders 22-17.

Beuerlein kept getting up, passing for 375 yards, including 30- and 49-yard scoring bombs to Marcus Allen and Tim Brown.

After three games, the Rams had a league-leading 21 sacks, which projects to 112 for the season (the NFL record is 72). On offense, Greg Bell had his second successive 100-yard game, denting the Raiders for 109 yards.

At Texas Stadium, a safety that wasn't a safety cost the Dallas Cowboys a 12-10 loss to the Giants. Darryl Clack of Dallas lost the opening kickoff in the sun as the ball hit his shoulder pads and rolled into the end zone. He picked it up and tried to run out, but was tackled by New York's Mark Collins on a play that was ruled a safety. But, because Clack never had possession before the ball rolled into the end zone, the drop should have been called a "muff," not a fumble, making the play a touchback instead of a safety and giving the Cowboys the ball on their 20.

Replay official Armen Terzian admitted the mistake later. "The rule states that if the return man muffs the ball and it goes into the end zone, he must recover the ball, but he has no responsibility to take it out," Terzian said. "The referee later confirmed that he thought the return man had possession of the ball, then fumbled. I was remiss in not reviewing the play at the time." Terzian drew a suspension over the call and resigned. ◆



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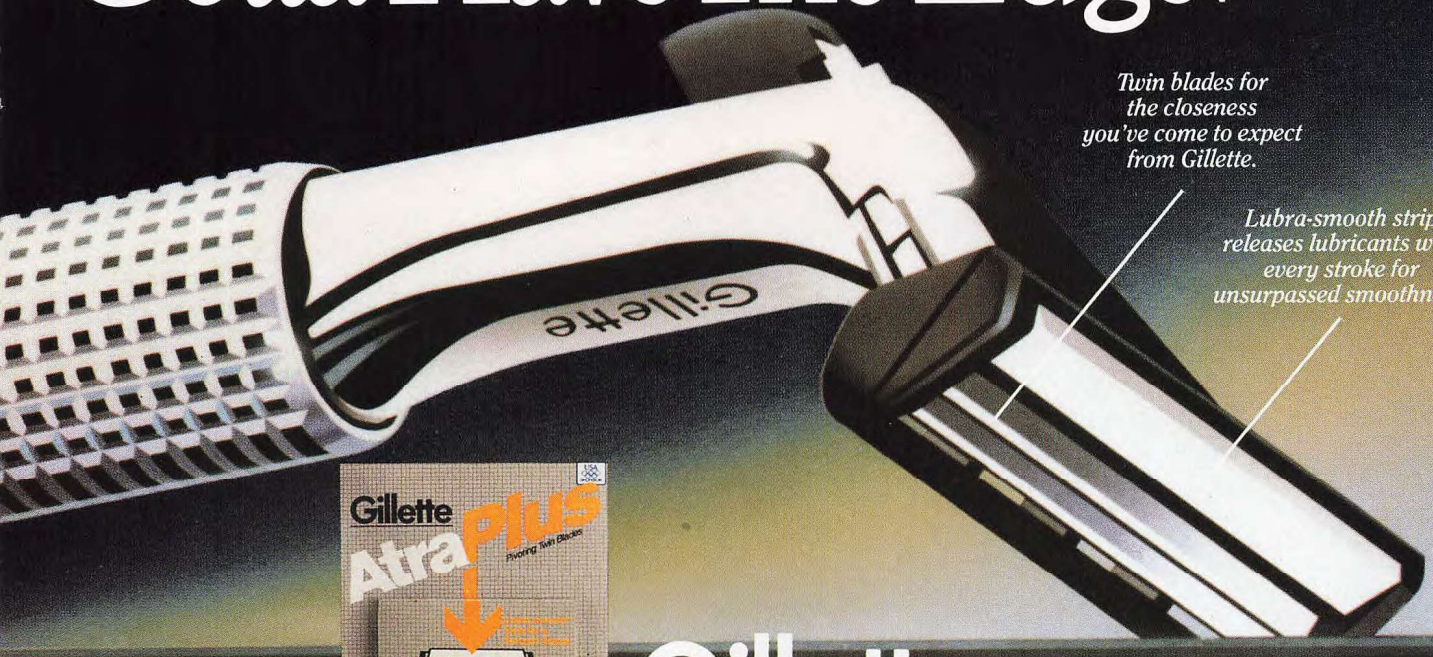

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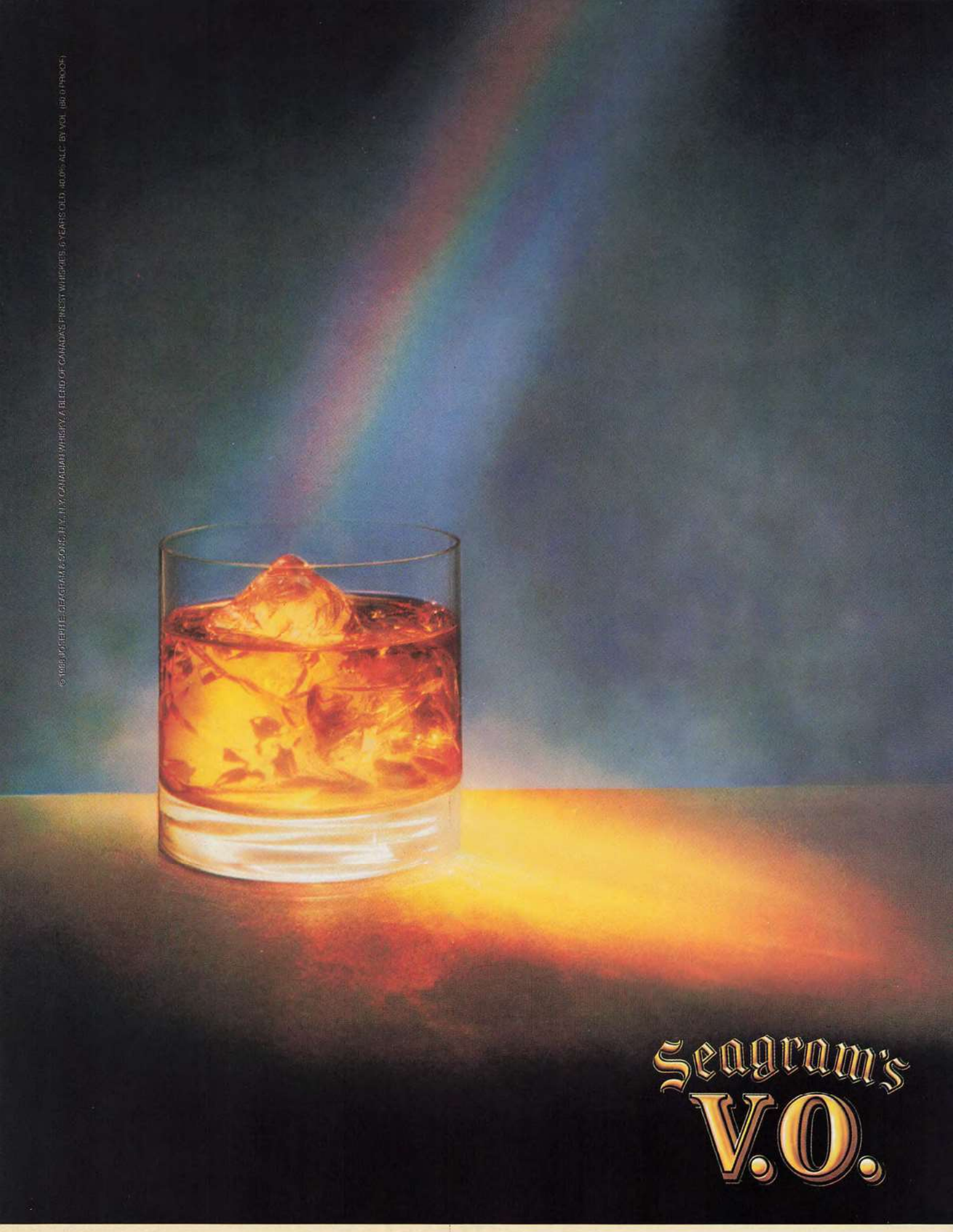
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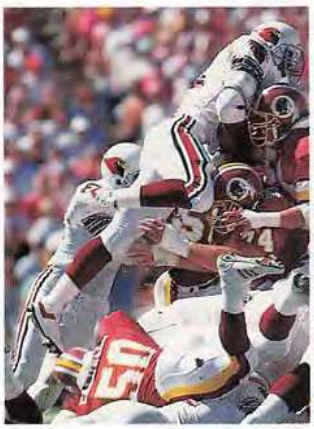
WEEK 4 SEPTEMBER 25

IF IT'S MONDAY, LOOK out for the Raiders.

It doesn't seem to matter whether the team is in Oakland or Los Angeles, when it's Monday, the Raiders just win, baby.

Four weeks into the season they raised their all-time Monday Night Football record to 26-5-1 with an improbable 30-27 overtime defeat of Denver. To win, the Raiders had to overcome a 24-0 halftime deficit—in Denver.

The victory tied the margin for the NFL's third-greatest comeback. The Raiders themselves did it once before,



SCOTT CUNNINGHAM

Rookie fullback Tony Jordan scored two short touchdowns as Phoenix downed Washington 30-21.

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	4	0	0
N.Y. Jets	3	1	0
Indianapolis	1	3	0
Miami	1	3	0
New England	1	3	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	4	0	0
Houston	3	1	0
Cleveland	2	2	0
Pittsburgh	1	3	0
AFC West			
L.A. Raiders	2	2	0
San Diego	2	2	0
Seattle	2	2	0
Denver	1	3	0
Kansas City	1	3	0

NFC East	W	L	T
Dallas	2	2	0
N.Y. Giants	2	2	0
Phoenix	2	2	0
Washington	2	2	0
Philadelphia	1	3	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	3	1	0
Minnesota	3	1	0
Detroit	1	3	0
Tampa Bay	1	3	0
Green Bay	0	4	0
NFC West			
L.A. Rams	4	0	0
New Orleans	3	1	0
San Francisco	3	1	0
Atlanta	1	3	0

SCORES

AFC
Buffalo 36, Pittsburgh 28
Cincinnati 24, Cleveland 17
Houston 31, New England 6
Indianapolis 15, Miami 13
L.A. Raiders 30, Denver 27 (OT)
San Diego 24, Kansas City 23
NFC
Chicago 24, Green Bay 6
Dallas 26, Atlanta 20
L.A. Rams 45, N.Y. Giants 31
Minnesota 23, Philadelphia 21
New Orleans 13, Tampa Bay 9
Phoenix 30, Washington 21
Interconference
N.Y. Jets 17, Detroit 10
San Francisco 38, Seattle 7

The Buffalo Scoring Machine

CRAIG MELVIN

Norwood had the hot foot.

With a 4-0 record, the Buffalo Bills were off to their best start since 1980.

There were 12 good reasons for this—a hot defense (that's 11 reasons) and a hot kicker. The Bills had scored only five touchdowns for a total of 30 points in their four victories, but kicker Scott Norwood had scored 44 all by himself.

In Buffalo's latest victory, the 28-year-old Norwood hit five field goals to tie the team record and boost the Bills past Pittsburgh 36-28. It ran his streak of successful three-pointers to a club-record 12 in a row and gave him 13 in 14 attempts this year.

Norwood also ran his streak of successful conversions to 47 in a row.

"I think the reason for this groove is good kicking weather and getting lots of opportunities," Norwood said. "It's tough to maintain a groove when you don't kick for a couple of weeks."

Norwood was having no trouble keeping busy. His kicks had provided the victory margin in all four Bills victories, including a 41-yard field goal that beat New England 16-14 with 11 seconds to go.

"When Scott winds up to kick at the end of a ball game, I'm assuming it's going to go through the uprights," special teams coach Bruce DeHaven said. "I don't think he's ever going to miss because of the situation."

Norwood was enjoying his success, but taking it calmly.

"I just don't believe in jumping up and down," he said. "I believe a kicker has to stay on an even keel. He can't get too high when he makes one, and he can't get too low when he misses one.

"You make it and then start visualizing your next kick."

rallying from a 24-0 deficit to defeat San Diego on a Monday night in 1982.

"When we came in at halftime, I wish I could say that I gave some Knute Rockne speech," said first-year head coach Mike Shanahan. "I said I was embarrassed, and there was a lot of pride at stake. I told the team we just have to play one play at a time."

Doing just that, the Raiders tied the game at 27-27 when Chris Bahr kicked a 44-yard field goal with four seconds left in regulation.

In overtime, reserve safety

Jim Everett had enough time and enough open receivers to beat the Giants and keep the Rams undefeated 45-31.

Zeph Lee intercepted a pass (the Raiders' fourth interception of John Elway) on his first scrimmage play of the night and returned it 20 yards to set up Bahr for the 35-yard field goal that won the game.

The Raiders' comeback was led by Jay Schroeder in his first game since being traded from Washington three weeks earlier. Schroeder passed for 242 yards, ran for 36, and got the rally started with two short passes to fullback Steve Smith that turned into 40- and 42-yard touchdown plays.

Lost in the furious comeback was a 119-yard, two-touchdown night by Denver's Tony Dorsett. A six-yard run in overtime sent Dorsett past Jim Brown's career rushing

DAVID BOSS

QUOTE

Eagles quarterback **Randall Cunningham**, after being sacked four times by Keith Millard of the Vikings:

"I saw him a lot. We're good friends now."

MARV RUBIN

PETE J. GROH

Ickey Woods made things sticky for the Browns as Cincinnati won an important divisional game.

total of 12,312 yards and made him the second-leading rusher in NFL history with 12,335.

It was a big weekend for the other team from Los Angeles, too. The Rams remained the NFC's only unbeaten team (4-0) by jumping to a 28-3 lead and holding off the Giants 45-31 at Giants Stadium in New Jersey.

Third-year quarterback Jim Everett, maturing in a hurry, threw five touchdown passes to five different receivers, including bombs to Aaron Cox (69 yards) and Henry Ellard (41). Greg Bell ran for 112 yards and a touchdown, and the Rams' defense sacked Phil Simms four times and set up four touchdowns with a blocked punt, two recovered fumbles, and an interception.

"We're playing well, but we're a long way from where we want to be," Rams head coach John Robinson said.

In Cincinnati, the surprising Bengals remained unbeaten, too, using a supercharged running game to stop Cleveland 24-17. Boomer Esiason, the league's top-rated quarterback, completed only 8 of 23 passes, but James Brooks (83 yards), Stanley Wilson (68), and rookie Ickey Woods (62 and two touchdowns) did the damage on the ground.

Also helping out was cornerback Lewis Billups, who scooped up a fumble by Browns running back Kevin Mack (stripped by end Skip McClendon) and returned it 26 yards for a touchdown.

In New Orleans, the Saints won their third in a row, squeezing past Tampa Bay 13-9. Two field goals by Morten Andersen were the difference in the game, the first set up by cornerback Van Jakes's 39-yard interception return, and the second by Gene Atkins's 57-yard kickoff return.

"I think this game shows the parity that exists in the NFL," Saints head coach Jim Mora said. "We played hard, did the best we could, and thank God we won."

The Colts were thankful for Dean Biasucci, who made five field goals, including kicks of 50 and 51 yards, to lead Indianapolis to its first victory, 15-13 over Miami.

Eric Dickerson ran for 125 yards and, in only his sixth NFL season, moved up to eighth on the all-time rushing list with 8,701 yards.

The Vikings won their third consecutive game and handed the Eagles their third straight loss with a last-minute 23-21 victory in Minneapolis. Chuck Nelson, who missed a 45-yard field goal with three minutes to go, made a 32-yard kick with 15 seconds left to decide it.

Tommy Kramer, who shrugged off a bruised and swollen left hand to pass for 299 yards, led the game-winning 54-yard drive. Anthony Carter had six catches for 113 yards, including 27- and 13-yard receptions on the final drive.

In Phoenix, the Cardinals surprised the Redskins and their new quarterback, Mark Rypien, 30-21. Washington lost Doug Williams to an emergency appendectomy during the week, but Rypien replaced him and passed for 303 yards and three touchdowns.

However, the Cardinals, leading only 23-21, put the game away with 41 seconds left when defensive end Freddie Joe Nunn sacked Rypien and forced a fumble, which cornerback Cedric Mack returned 45 yards for the clinching touchdown. ◆

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

GEORGE GOJKOVICH

Bills' Mark Kelso

OWEN C. SHAW

Ed (Too Tall) Jones

AFC OFFENSE—Allen Pinkett, running back, Houston
Off to the best start of his pro career, Pinkett scored three touchdowns and totaled 143 yards rushing and receiving in the Oilers' 31-6 victory over New England. Included in his outburst were 51- and 22-yard touchdowns on screen passes from Cody Carlson.

AFC DEFENSE—Mark Kelso, safety, Buffalo
Kelso intercepted two passes, returned them 70 yards, and had four tackles as the unbeaten Bills outscored Pittsburgh 36-28. One of his interceptions set up a field goal.

NFC OFFENSE—Joe Montana, quarterback, San Francisco
Montana passed for 302 yards and four touchdowns in the 49ers' 38-7 rout of Seattle. Three of his touchdown passes, including bombs of 69 and 60 yards, went to Jerry Rice. Rice caught six passes for 163 yards, his third successive 100-yard receiving game.

NFC DEFENSE—Ed (Too Tall) Jones, end, Dallas
Jones teamed up with tackle Danny Noonan to lead the Cowboys past Atlanta 26-20. Jones had five tackles, including a sack, forced a fumble, and broke up two passes, one of which Noonan carried 17 yards for a touchdown. Noonan also sacked Chris Miller for a safety.

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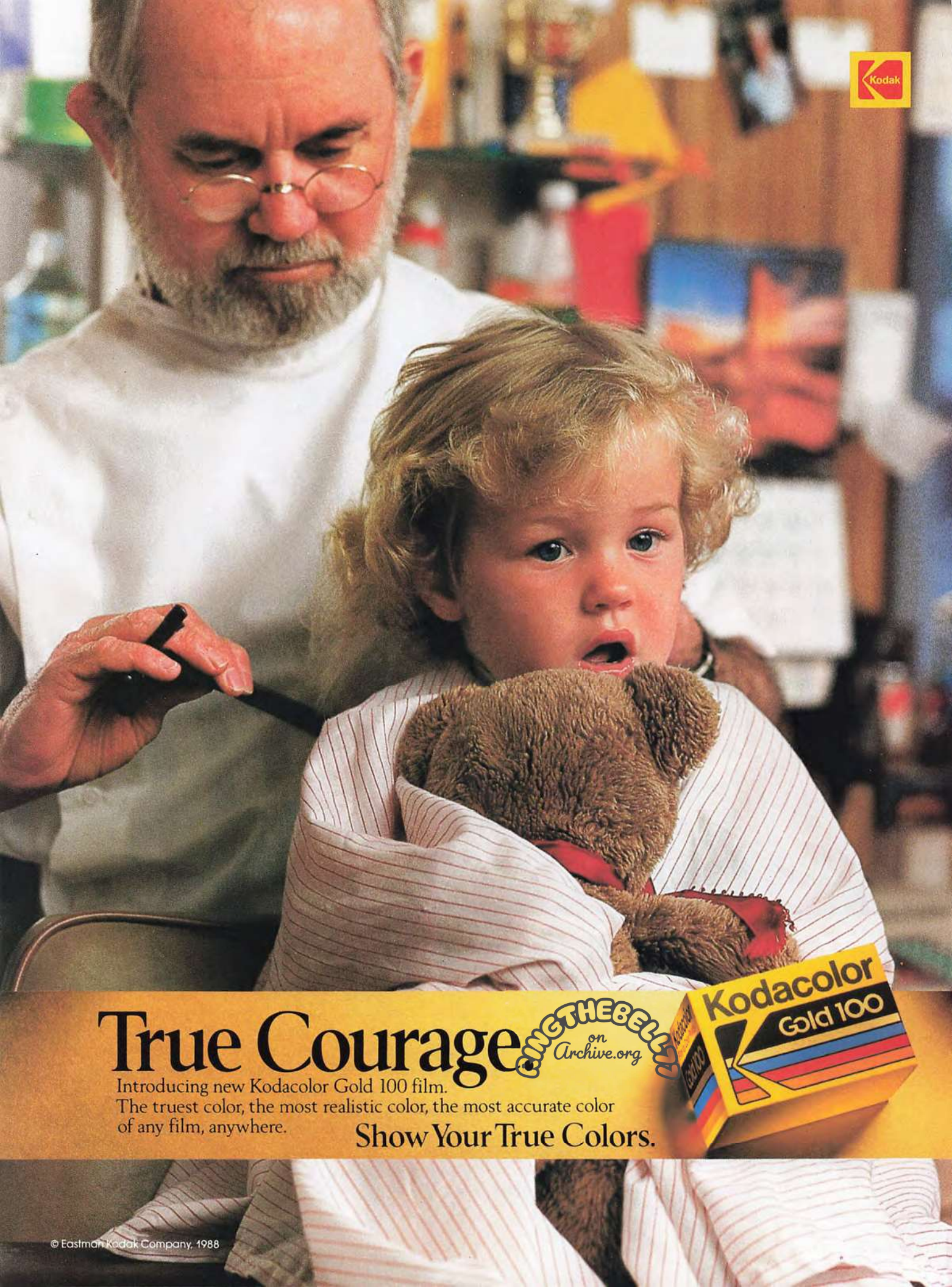
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WEEK 5 OCTOBER 2

FIVE WEEKS INTO THE season, there was just one unbeaten team left in the NFL.

The Cincinnati Bengals, trying to go from last to first in one year, blew away the Raiders 45-21 in Los Angeles and left town with a 5-0 record.

That's one more game than they won in all of 1987, when they finished 4-11 and last in the AFC Central Division.

"This was the real test as to whether we had a true contender," Bengals head coach Sam Wyche said. "We passed the test with flying colors."

Actually, they passed the test with flying footballs. The air assault was led by Boomer Esiason, who passed for 332 yards and three touchdowns against a Los Angeles secondary missing three starters.

BRUCE DIERDORFF

Even when the Bears weren't sacking Jim Kelly, they were knocking him around during a 24-3 victory.

"Esiason's the best quarterback in football so far this year," Raiders cornerback Mike Haynes said. "And if you give a guy like that a lot of time, he'll pick you apart."

In picking the Raiders apart, Esiason completed 21 of 28 attempts, including 10 in a row at one point, and threw touchdown passes to tight end Rodney Holman and wide receivers Tim McGee and Ira Hillary.

Cincinnati's defense intercepted the Raiders' Jay Schroeder four times, including two by safety David Fulcher.

The Bengals' 5-0 start was their best since they began 6-0 in 1975, general manager Paul Brown's last year as head coach.

Two other unbeaten teams, Buffalo and the Rams, had their four-game winning streaks ended emphatically.

Buffalo lost 24-3 to the Bears in Chicago, and the Rams lost at home to resurgent Phoenix 41-27.

The Bears sacked Buffalo's Jim Kelly six times, limited the Bills to zero rushing yards, and held the ball for nearly 39 minutes.

Chicago's Jim McMahon passed for 260 yards and two touchdowns, including a 63-yard strike to Ron Morris. He also threw the key block on linebacker Cornelius Bennett that sprung Dennis Gentry on a 58-yard reverse for another touchdown. Bennett was about to tackle Gentry when McMahon cut him down.

"Those kinds of blocks aren't hard," McMahon said. "The guy is running into you, and all you have to do is fall down."

The Cardinals steamrolled the Rams for 519 yards in winning their third game in a row. Neil Lomax passed for 342 yards and two touchdowns, while Earl Ferrell and Stump Mitchell ran for 97 and 80 yards, respectively. Mitchell broke four tackles en route to a 35-yard touchdown.

"We didn't tackle, defend the run, defend the pass, or rush the passer," Rams head coach John Robinson said. "Other than that. . . ."

GEORGE GOJKOVICH

Mike Pagel passed for only 131 yards, but he stayed healthy and led the Browns to victory.

Making Last-Second Whoopee

GEORGE ROSE

Andersen got happy feet.

After beating Dallas on a 49-yard field goal as time expired, Morten Andersen of New Orleans jumped for joy.

"That was probably my biggest one," he said. "I've got to see the replay."

Andersen's kick was big for a lot of reasons. It not only won the game, but it gave the Saints four victories in a row (and 13 in their last 14 regular-season games). And it came in their first appearance on Monday night television in four years.

They had taken a 14-0 lead over Dallas behind two touchdown passes by Bobby Hebert, but the Cowboys, who had beaten New Orleans six successive times, came storming back. Led by Herschel Walker, who ran for 124 yards, and Steve Pelluer, who threw two touchdown passes to Kelvin Martin, Dallas tied the score at 14-14 in the third quarter and, with just 24 seconds left in the game, tied it again at 17-17 on Roger Ruzek's 39-yard field goal.

It appeared overtime was inevitable.

But Mel Gray returned the next kickoff 39 yards to his own 42-yard line. Then, after two incomplete passes, Hebert passed 26 yards to rookie wide receiver Brett Perriman, who made a diving catch at the Dallas 32.

The clock showed two seconds to play when Andersen came onto the field. His winning kick sailed down the middle, which was no surprise. He's the most accurate field-goal kicker in NFL history—but he got excited anyway.

"I went blank out there for about three minutes," he said. "Elation. . . pure joy. I didn't know what to do. I just started running and jumping to work off all that energy I had left. High-fives, low-fives, head butts.

"Then I thought I'd better get the heck out of there before I got hurt."

WEEK 5

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	4	1	0
N.Y. Jets	3	1	1
Miami	2	3	0
New England	2	3	0
Indianapolis	1	4	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	5	0	0
Cleveland	3	2	0
Houston	3	2	0
Pittsburgh	1	4	0
AFC West			
Seattle	3	2	0
Denver	2	3	0
L.A. Raiders	2	3	0
San Diego	2	3	0
Kansas City	1	3	1

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	3	2	0
Phoenix	3	2	0
Dallas	2	3	0
Philadelphia	2	3	0
Washington	2	3	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	4	1	0
Minnesota	3	2	0
Tampa Bay	2	3	0
Detroit	1	4	0
Green Bay	0	5	0
NFC West			
L.A. Rams	4	1	0
New Orleans	4	1	0
San Francisco	4	1	0
Atlanta	1	4	0

SCORES

AFC
Cincinnati 45, L.A. Raiders 21
Cleveland 23, Pittsburgh 9
Denver 12, San Diego 0
Kansas City 17, N.Y. Jets 17 (OT)
New England 21, Indianapolis 17
NFC
New Orleans 20, Dallas 17
N.Y. Giants 24, Washington 23
Phoenix 41, L.A. Rams 27
San Francisco 20, Detroit 13
Tampa Bay 27, Green Bay 24
Interconference
Chicago 24, Buffalo 3
Miami 24, Minnesota 7
Philadelphia 32, Houston 23
Seattle 31, Atlanta 20

The Eagles had lost three games in a row, and things got darker when they fell behind Houston 16-0 early in the first quarter. They had their first two punts blocked. Houston's Cris Dishman returned the initial block 10 yards for a touchdown while Eric Fairs blocked the next one out of the end zone for a safety.

"Every time we punted," Eagles head coach Buddy Ryan said, "it was a thrill to see if we were going to get it off."

Eagles quarterback Randall Cunningham responded, however, by leading his team to 32 consecutive points and a much-needed 32-23 victory. He passed for 289 yards and two touchdowns and ran 33 yards for another score. Keith Byars helped out by rushing for 82 yards and catching four passes while the defense held the Oilers to 194 yards.

But there was a down side to Philadelphia's victory. Five-time Pro Bowl wide receiver Mike Quick suffered a broken leg.

In Washington, the Redskins had broken hearts after rookie Chip Lohmiller missed a 36-yard field-goal attempt with 2:54 left to saddle his team with a 24-23 loss to the Giants. Lohmiller also missed a conversion attempt.

The Giants took an early lead and raised it to 24-9 in the third quarter on Phil Simms's 28-yard touchdown pass to Odessa Turner. But Mark Rypien rallied the Redskins by throwing 49- and 21-yard touchdown passes to Ricky Sanders to cut the lead to one.

"It's just real sad when you can't kick field goals and can't win the football game," said Redskins defensive end Dexter Manley, who sacked Simms four times.

The Seahawks had lost two games in a row, so, in Atlanta, they turned to rookie quarterback Kelly Stouffer, who led his team to a 31-20 victory over the Falcons. Stouffer led four touchdown drives of 64 yards or longer while Curt Warner ran for 110 yards and one of the touchdowns. John L. Williams, playing with a fractured rib, got the Seahawks' other three touchdowns on one-yard runs.

Atlanta's John Settle—a second-year free agent from Appalachian State—replaced the injured Gerald Riggs and rushed for 115 yards while catching six passes.

Three weeks earlier, Tampa Bay's Donald Igwebuike kicked a 28-yard field goal to beat Green Bay 13-10 as time ran out. The two teams met again, and, with 12 seconds left, Igwebuike hit from 44 yards to frustrate the Packers again, 27-24.

In Pittsburgh, the Steelers took a 9-7 halftime lead over Cleveland on three field goals by Gary Anderson. But the Browns scored 16 points in the second half following turnovers, including rookie safety Brian Washington's 75-yard interception runback for a touchdown, and won 23-9. ♦

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

HERB SNITZER

Patriots' Doug Flutie

GEORGE ROSE

Cardinals' Neil Lomax

AFC OFFENSE—Doug Flutie, quarterback, New England
Flutie came off the bench in the fourth quarter to direct 70- and 80-yard touchdown drives that enabled the Patriots to stop the Colts 21-17. With 23 seconds left, he scored the winning touchdown on a 13-yard bootleg around left end.
AFC DEFENSE—Mark Brown, linebacker, Miami
Brown stopped two drives with interceptions, made eight tackles, and deflected three more passes in Miami's 24-7 defeat of Minnesota. Other Dolphins interceptions by cornerback William Judson and linebacker John Offerdahl set up touchdowns.
NFC OFFENSE—Neil Lomax, quarterback, Phoenix
Ignoring a painful arthritic hip, Lomax passed for 342 yards and two touchdowns and directed 94- and 95-yard scoring drives as the Cardinals stopped the Rams 41-27.
NFC DEFENSE—Clyde Simmons, end, Philadelphia
Simmons sacked Houston quarterback Cody Carlson twice, once for a safety and once to force a fumble, and had two other tackles as the Eagles rallied to defeat the Oilers 32-23.

BILL CUMMINGS

Lawrence Taylor had two sacks, one of which caused a fumble, in the Giants' victory over Washington.

QUOTE

Bills center **Kent Hull**, depressed after his team's 24-3 loss to the Bears:
"Maybe the coaches won't force us to watch a tape of this game. Maybe they'll just burn it."

MARV RUBIN

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WEEK 6 OCTOBER 9

DAN HONDA

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	5	1	0
N.Y. Jets	3	2	1
Miami	3	3	0
New England	2	4	0
Indianapolis	1	5	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	6	0	0
Houston	4	2	0
Cleveland	3	3	0
Pittsburgh	1	5	0
AFC West			
Seattle	4	2	0
Denver	3	3	0
L.A. Raiders	2	4	0
San Diego	2	4	0
Kansas City	1	4	1

NFC East	W	L	T
Phoenix	4	2	0
N.Y. Giants	3	3	0
Philadelphia	3	3	0
Washington	3	3	0
Dallas	2	4	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	5	1	0
Minnesota	4	2	0
Tampa Bay	2	4	0
Detroit	1	5	0
Green Bay	1	5	0
NFC West			
L.A. Rams	5	1	0
New Orleans	5	1	0
San Francisco	4	2	0
Atlanta	1	5	0

SCORES

AFC
Buffalo 34, Indianapolis 23
Cincinnati 36, New York Jets 19
Houston 7, Kansas City 6
Miami 24, L.A. Raiders 14
Seattle 16, Cleveland 10
NFC
Chicago 24, Detroit 7
L.A. Rams 33, Atlanta 0
Minnesota 14, Tampa Bay 13
Philadelphia 24, N.Y. Giants 13
Washington 35, Dallas 17
Interconference
Denver 16, San Francisco 13 (OT)
Green Bay 45, New England 3
New Orleans 23, San Diego 17
Phoenix 31, Pittsburgh 14

WORKING AS A FIREMAN or policeman is a hazardous way to make a living. So is playing quarterback in the NFL.

Seven quarterbacks were knocked out of action with injuries in week six, and one team, Cleveland, was forced to summon its fourth signal caller of the year.

The Browns previously had lost Bernie Kosar (sprained elbow) and Gary Danielson (broken ankle). Now, in a 16-10 loss to Seattle, Mike Pagel joined the list. Pagel suffered a separated shoulder when he tackled safety Paul Moyer, who had returned a blocked field goal 62 yards to Cleveland's 20.

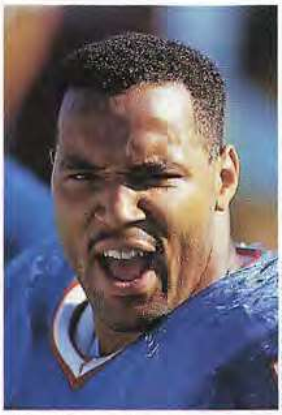
"I just want to know who put this [quarterback] jinx on us," Pagel said.

The latest mishap in Cleveland left the Browns with Don Strock, 37, as their new quarterback. Against Seattle, Strock fumbled and threw an interception, setting up two field goals by the Seahawks' Norm Johnson. Moyer's return also set up a field goal.

Doctors predicted Pagel would be out four to six weeks. Joining him on the sidelines in week 6 were the Lions' Chuck Long (sprained knee, out four to six weeks); the Oilers' Cody Carlson (dislocated thumb with a chipped bone, out three to four weeks); the Chargers' Babe Laufenberg (bruised ribs, out a week or two); the Bears' Jim McMahon (concussion); the 49ers' Joe Montana (bruised ribs); and the Colts' Chris Chandler (bruised sternum). Fortunately for the Bears, 49ers, and Colts, McMahon, Montana, and Chandler were expected back for week 7.

John Elway suffered five sacks, but his fourth-quarter touchdown pass sent the game into overtime.

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK



GEORGE GOJKOVICH

Bills' Cornelius Bennett

PAUL SPINELLI/NFLP

Rams' Kevin Greene

AFC OFFENSE—Ickey Woods, running back, Cincinnati
Woods, a second-round draft choice in 1988, rushed for 139 yards, scored on 5- and 17-yard runs, and helped the Bengals stay unbeaten with a 36-19 victory over the Jets.
AFC DEFENSE—Cornelius Bennett, linebacker, Buffalo
Bennett made seven tackles and recovered a fumble at the Colts' 9-yard line to set up a field goal as the Bills rallied from a 17-0 deficit to defeat Indianapolis 34-23. Bennett and his teammates held Eric Dickerson, the NFL's leading rusher, to 66 yards.
NFC OFFENSE—Randall Cunningham, quarterback, Philadelphia
Cunningham passed for a career-high 369 yards and three touchdowns, including an 80-yarder to Cris Carter, to lead the Eagles to a 24-13 conquest of the Giants. Cunningham completed 31 of 41 attempts as the Eagles snapped a six-game losing streak to New York.
NFC DEFENSE—Kevin Greene, linebacker, Los Angeles Rams
Greene had three sacks, made two other tackles, and intercepted a pass at the Rams' 2 in his team's 33-0 rout of the Falcons.

In Pontiac, Michigan, where McMahon and Long both were injured, the Bears held onto first place in the NFC Central with a 24-7 rout of the Lions. Before being hurt, McMahon threw a touchdown pass, and Mike Tomczak, who replaced him, threw another.

In San Francisco, Denver's Rich Karlis missed a 34-yard field goal in the swirling wind of Candlestick Park with two seconds left in regulation, then made a 22-yard kick to beat the 49ers 16-13 in overtime.

"This was a great win for us," Denver head coach Dan Reeves said. "Our team didn't quit. To hold them to thirteen points is a big, big step for us."

Karlis's winning kick was set up by cornerback Steve Wilson, who intercepted a pass by Steve Young that

bounced off Jerry Rice's hands. Wilson returned it seven yards to the 49ers' 5.

Because of the wind, both teams chose to run the ball, with Roger Craig gaining 143 yards for the 49ers and Sammy Winder 100 for the Broncos. But it was an eight-yard

JOHN MCDONOUGH

Rueben Mayes and the Saints controlled the ball for nearly 40 minutes in a 23-17 victory over San Diego.

touchdown pass from John Elway to Vance Johnson in the fourth quarter that tied the game 13-13 and set up the overtime.

A quarterback who remained healthy—and hot—was Boomer Esiason, who led the Bengals to their sixth consecutive victory, equaling the club's best start ever. Esiason threw 60- and 8-yard touchdown passes to Eddie Brown and one of 38 yards to Tim McGee in Cincinnati's 36-19 victory over the Jets.

Esiason also ran for 61 yards on three carries, while rookie Ickey Woods rushed for 139 and two touchdowns. Woods replaced Stanley Wilson, whose fumble had set up an early Jets touchdown.

"Once you've got a guy with hot feet and he's working, you don't take him out," Bengals head coach Sam Wyche said.

Another guy with hot feet was the Rams' Greg Bell, who

MIKE MOORE

Roy Green found a lot of open spaces against the Steelers, picking up 119 yards on four catches.

rang up his fourth 100-yard game in five weeks, rushing for 155 and a touchdown in a 33-0 rout of the Falcons in Atlanta.

While Bell rolled along on the ground, Jim Everett passed for three touchdowns, including a 54-yard effort to Henry Ellard, who celebrated by doing a forward flip in the end zone. Meanwhile, the Rams' defense sacked Falcons quarterbacks Steve Dils and Hugh Millen nine times.

The Saints stayed in a tie with the Rams for first place in the NFC West, storming from behind to beat the Chargers 23-17 in San Diego.

The Chargers took a 14-0 lead in the game's first six minutes on Laufenberg's 47-yard touchdown pass to rookie Anthony Miller and Roy Bennett's recovery of a blocked punt (by safety Vencie Glenn) in the end zone.

But Bobby Hebert threw two touchdown passes, and Morten Andersen kicked three field goals as the Saints won their fifth in a row.

Another hot team, Phoenix, took over sole possession of first place in the NFC East with a 31-14 romp past Pittsburgh. It was the fourth win in a row for head coach Gene Stallings's team.

Neil Lomax passed for 291 yards and three touchdowns for the Cardinals, including two scoring tosses to J.T. Smith.

Pittsburgh cornerback Rod Woodson returned a kickoff 92 yards for a touchdown, but it wasn't enough to prevent his team's fifth successive loss.

It was a good day for the winless Packers, however, as they overwhelmed New England 45-3 to avoid matching the poorest start in club history (0-6 in 1986).

Brent Fullwood ran for 118 yards and scored on 33-, 7-, and 31-yard runs. On defense, the Packers intercepted five passes by Doug Flutie and Steve Grogan. ♦

A Change for the Better

HERB WEITMAN

Bryant was just waiting for a call to action.

Washington head coach Joe Gibbs is not afraid to make changes.

So, as his Redskins floundered with two successive losses, Gibbs took Super Bowl hero Timmy Smith out of the game at Dallas and put Kelvin Bryant in at running back.

The result was a spectacular game for Bryant and a 35-17 victory for the Redskins. Bryant rushed for 118 yards and a touchdown, and caught five passes for 82 yards and two more touchdowns.

"We wanted Kelvin to play," Gibbs said after the game. "We wanted to find out if he could hold up. Well, he looked awfully good. He caught balls and ran hard. And he took some shots and held up."

Bryant was an outstanding part-time player in his first two-and-a-half years with the Redskins, but, nagged by hamstring injuries, he started only one game. He usually played in passing situations, catching 43 passes in both 1986 and 1987.

"Kelvin is the best I've ever worked with coming out of the backfield [as a receiver]," Gibbs said. "He's tall, he has the strength to shed blocks, and he has good hands."

Bryant was elated about his day against the Cowboys.

"I feel more like I'm a part of the team when I'm in there on first down, instead of just third down," he said. "I feel good now. I want the ball in my hands."

Gibbs started him in the next game.

QUOTE

MARV RUBIN

Broncos kicker **Rich Karlis**, discussing a 34-yard field goal he missed in windy Candlestick Park that could have beaten the 49ers with two seconds left in regulation time:

"This wasn't a day to hit a golf ball—or kick a football, either."

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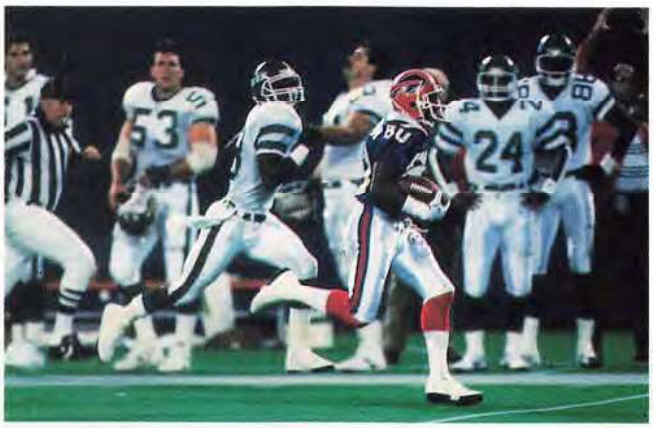
WEEK 7 OCTOBER 16

WITH APOLOGIES TO William (The Refrigerator) Perry, the Bears' defense was getting a little thin.

When they lost Pro Bowl linebacker Wilber Marshall to the Redskins in the offseason, the Bears felt they still had an outstanding defense. But when they lined up against the Dallas Cowboys in week 7, they were missing four more starters, including Perry, linebacker Otis Wilson, and safeties Dave Duerson and Shaun Gayle.



JIM TURNER

Flip Johnson's first pro reception was a big one— he went 66 yards for a Buffalo touchdown.

So what happened? The Bears' allegedly depleted defense still overwhelmed the Cowboys in a 17-7 victory—and almost halfway through the season, Chicago had allowed the fewest points in the NFL, 74.

"No question, this is the best defense we've faced," Dallas head coach Tom Landry said. "They put great pressure on us."

Four big reasons the Bears were putting great pressure on Dallas and everyone else were the guys up front. Two of them—tackles Steve McMichael and Dan Hampton—combined for 4½ sacks of Danny White, who had replaced injured starter Steve Pelluer.

"People all over the world are looking for defensive linemen who can rush the passer," Hampton said. "We've got guys who can rush the passer."

Against Dallas, the Bears also gave two rookies their first defensive starts, and one of them, safety David Tate, had two interceptions, while the other, linebacker Dante Jones, had nine tackles.

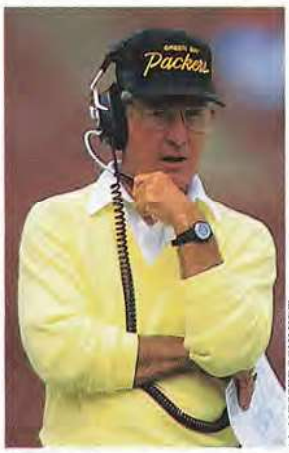
More help was on the way. Duerson was expected back in a week, while linebacker Jim Morrissey, who replaced Wilson and then got hurt himself, was expected back soon. Perry, who broke his left arm in the third game, had a chance to return late in the season. Wilson and Gayle were gone for the season.

The Bears were one of four teams with NFL-leading 6-1 records. New Orleans in the NFC and Buffalo and Cincinnati in the AFC also were 6-1.

The Saints won their tenth successive road game by squeezing past Seattle 20-19.

Seahawks rookie Kelly Stouffer passed for 370 yards and a touchdown, and Norm Johnson kicked four field goals. But Johnson's 36-yard attempt in the third quarter

From Sad Sacks to the Sack Pack



AL MESSERSCHMIDT

His Pack was to the wall.

When Lindy Infante became head coach of the Green Bay Packers during the spring in 1988, he brought fresh enthusiasm and a reputation as an offensive innovator.

People said he would need a lot more than that to revive a franchise that had had only four winning seasons in the 20 years since Vince Lombardi was in charge.

When Green Bay started 0-5, no one was surprised, but it was tough on the new coach trying to make a reputation.

"All of the losses were low points for me," Infante said. "We were just our own worst enemy. I knew we were a better football team. We weren't giving ourselves a chance to succeed."

They surely gave themselves a chance to succeed in weeks 6 and 7.

In week 6, the Packers stunned New England 45-3 as Don Majkowski replaced injured Randy Wright at quarterback and completed 18 of 26 passes. Brent Fullwood rushed for 118 yards and scored three times, and the defense intercepted five passes.

In week 7, the Minnesota Vikings had no excuse for being surprised, but the Packers mauled them, too, winning 34-14 in Minneapolis. Majkowski passed for 243 yards, Max Zendejas tied the team's single-game record with four field goals, and the defense forced five turnovers. In addition, linebacker Tim Harris sacked Wade Wilson for a safety, then blocked a punt and carried it 10 yards for a touchdown.

"Infante wouldn't let us get down," Harris said. "Everything was positive. He told us to keep working hard. . .that it would come. Finally, we know how to win."

When he emerged from his team's locker room, Infante was ecstatic.

"I feel like I won a gold medal at the Olympics," he said. "I'm sure there are greater things that have happened down through the Green Bay Packers' existence, but I don't know of a team you could be more proud of than the one that's in that room."

QUOTE

MARV RUBIN

Steelers head coach **Chuck Noll**, after his team lost its sixth consecutive game, 34-14 to Houston:

"I don't have to look at the movies to smell this one."

was blocked by safety Gene Atkins, and the ball bounced to cornerback Dave Waymer, who returned it 58 yards for a touchdown.

"It doesn't take a mathematician to figure out that was a ten-point swing," a disappointed Johnson said.

Up in Massachusetts, inconsistent New England met Cincinnati, the NFL's last unbeaten team. But it was the Patriots who forced six turnovers to bring the Bengals down to earth 27-21. Cincinnati's Boomer Esiason, the NFL's leading passer, was intercepted five times.

Interceptions by linebackers Johnny Rembert and Tim Jordan set up first-half touchdowns that gave New England a 14-0 lead, and Reggie Dupard ran for two touchdowns in the second half.

At the Meadowlands, the Bills, off to their best start since 1974, appeared on Monday night television for the first time in four years and destroyed the Jets 37-14. Jim Kelly passed for 302 yards and three touchdowns, including 65- and 16-yard scoring tosses to Andre Reed.

"This couldn't have come on a better night—before a prime-time national audience," Reed said. "Now a lot of people know what Buffalo can do."

A lot of people already knew what Warren Moon could do, but the Oilers' quarterback had been out since the first game with a fractured shoulder blade. He returned against Pittsburgh and threw 43- and 24-yard touchdown passes to old friends Ernest Givins and Drew Hill, and Houston won 34-14.

Defensively, linebacker Eugene Seale blocked a Steelers punt out of the end zone for a safety, and cornerback Cris Dishman blocked another one to set up a touchdown.

In Washington, there were a lot of skeptics when the Redskins traded quarterback Jay Schroeder to the Raiders in week 2, leaving inexperienced Mark Rypien as Doug Williams's backup. When Williams was sidelined after an emergency appendectomy, it looked as if Washington had made a mistake.

After four starts, however, Rypien replaced Esiason as the leading passer in the NFL, with 12 touchdown passes in four weeks. He threw for 303 yards and four touchdowns against Phoenix as the Redskins snapped the Cardinals' four-game winning streak 33-17. Art Monk and Gary Clark each caught two of Rypien's touchdown passes.

Another young quarterback with a hot hand was Tampa Bay's Vinny Testaverde, who passed for an NFL season-high 469 yards, including *226 in the fourth quarter*, as the Buccaneers staged a wild rally before losing to Indianapolis 35-31.

The Colts took a seemingly comfortable 35-10 lead into the fourth quarter, before Testaverde led Tampa Bay to 21 consecutive points. Wide receiver Bruce Hill caught seven passes for 162 yards, including both of Testaverde's touchdown passes.

In Cleveland, the Browns' defense sacked Randall Cunningham nine times, held the Eagles to 119 total yards, and put Philadelphia in a deep freeze 19-3. Cornerback Frank Minnifield intercepted two passes, one of them setting up a Browns touchdown.

On offense, quarterback Don Strock, wearing a list of about 60 plays on a wristband, made his first start since 1983 and passed for two touchdowns. ♦

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	6	1	0
Miami	4	3	0
N.Y. Jets	3	3	1
New England	3	4	0
Indianapolis	2	5	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	6	1	0
Houston	5	2	0
Cleveland	4	3	0
Pittsburgh	1	6	0
AFC West			
Denver	4	3	0
Seattle	4	3	0
L.A. Raiders	3	4	0
San Diego	2	5	0
Kansas City	1	5	1

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	4	3	0
Phoenix	4	3	0
Washington	4	3	0
Philadelphia	3	4	0
Dallas	2	5	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	6	1	0
Minnesota	4	3	0
Green Bay	2	5	0
Tampa Bay	2	5	0
Detroit	1	6	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	6	1	0
L.A. Rams	5	2	0
San Francisco	5	2	0
Atlanta	1	6	0

SCORES

AFC
Buffalo 37, N.Y. Jets 14
Houston 34, Pittsburgh 14
L.A. Raiders 27, Kansas City 17
Miami 31, San Diego 28
New England 27, Cincinnati 21
NFC
Chicago 17, Dallas 7
Green Bay 34, Minnesota 14
N.Y. Giants 30, Detroit 10
San Francisco 24, L.A. Rams 21
Washington 33, Phoenix 17
Interconference
Cleveland 19, Philadelphia 3
Denver 30, Atlanta 14
Indianapolis 35, Tampa Bay 31
New Orleans 20, Seattle 19

HERB SNITZER

Cedric Jones caught 3 of Doug Flutie's 10 completions as the Patriots surprised Cincinnati.

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

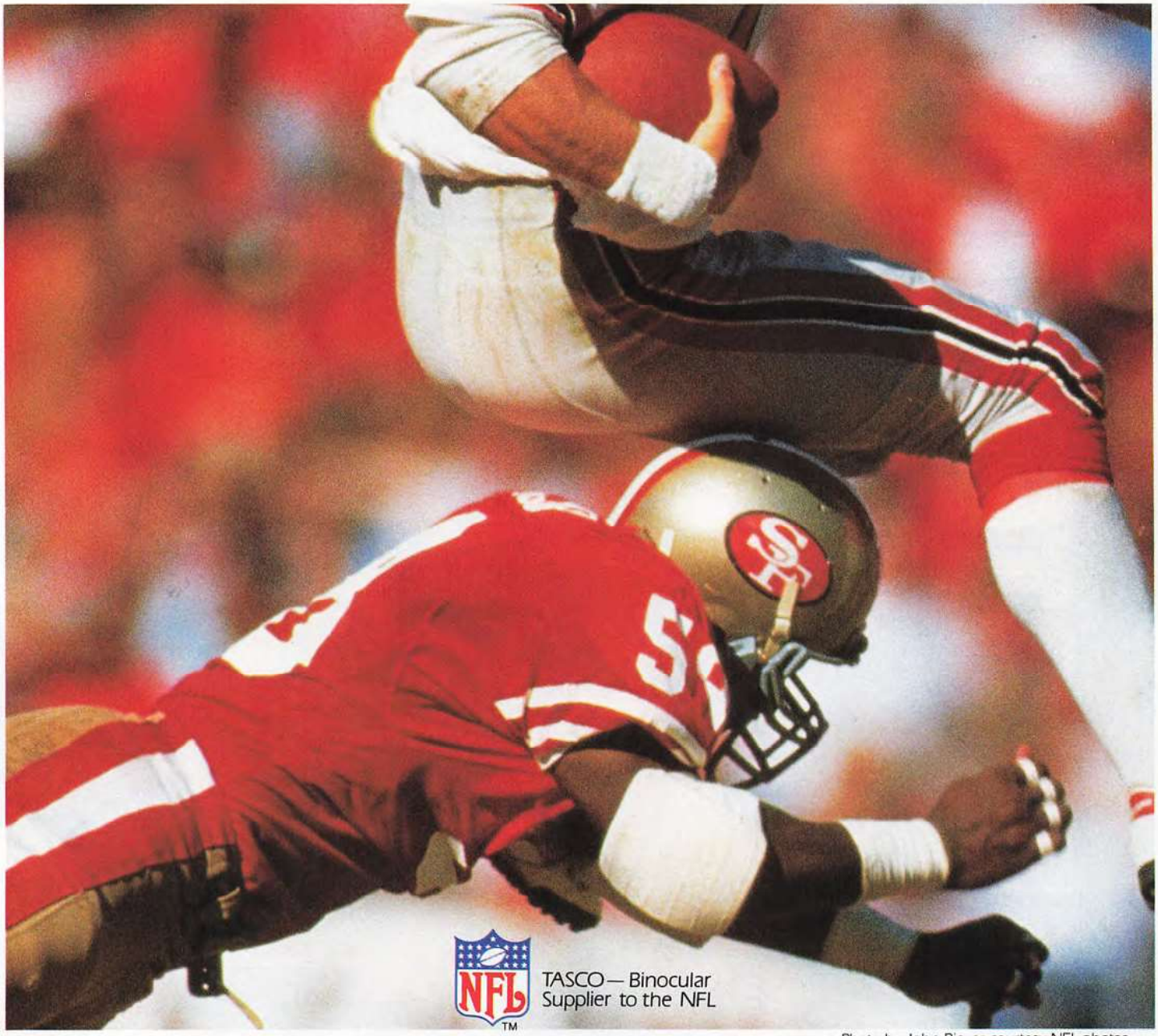
BRIAN DRAKE

Dolphins' Dan Marino

DAVID BOSS

49ers' Roger Craig

AFC OFFENSE—Dan Marino, quarterback, Miami
Marino passed for 329 yards and a touchdown, rallying the Dolphins to a 31-28 victory over San Diego. Mark Duper caught seven of Marino's passes for 118 yards, including the touchdown pass and a 51-yard strike that set up the winning touchdown.
AFC DEFENSE—Fred Marion, safety, New England
Marion broke up three drives with an interception, a fumble recovery, and a pass that he tipped to teammate Rod McSwain, as the Patriots surprised Cincinnati 27-21 for the Bengals' first loss. Marion also made eight tackles and broke up another pass.
NFC OFFENSE—Roger Craig, running back, San Francisco
Craig ran for three touchdowns and a career-high 190 yards to lead the 49ers to a critical 24-21 victory over the Rams. He finished his big day as the NFL's leading rusher with 764 yards.
NFC DEFENSE—Tim Harris, linebacker, Green Bay
Harris sacked Wade Wilson for a safety, blocked a punt and returned it for a touchdown, and made five other tackles, including a second sack, in Green Bay's 34-14 rout of the Vikings.



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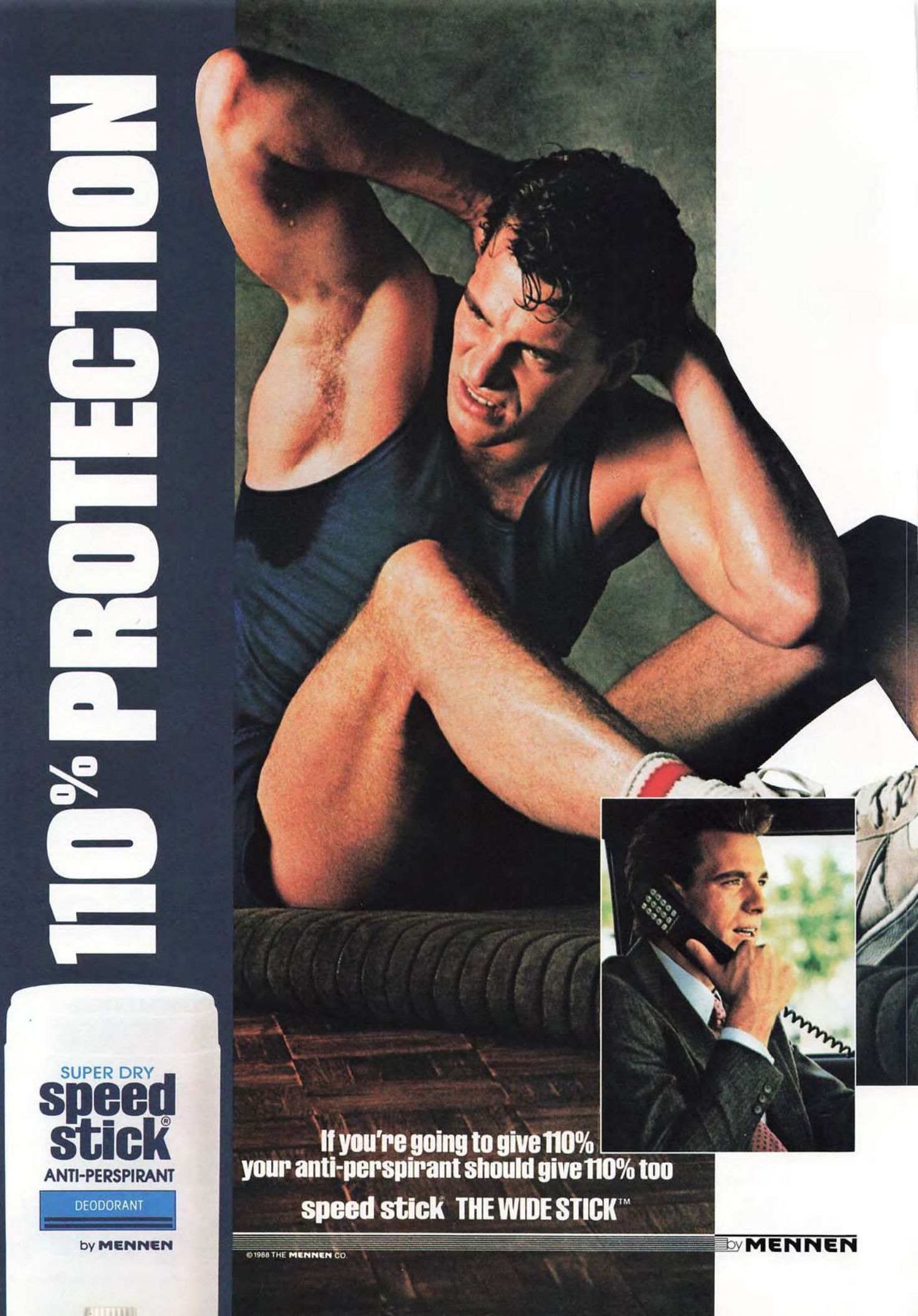

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WEEK 8 OCTOBER 23

AFTER BERNIE KOSAR, back from an elbow injury, had passed for 314 yards and three touchdowns to lead Cleveland to a 29-21 victory over Phoenix, Browns tackle Rickey Bolden summed it up.

"This was like getting our general back," Bolden said. "Bernie's just a special guy."

The special guy had been gone since early in the second quarter of the season's first game, when he sprained the elbow of his passing arm. Then, like dominoes falling, the Browns lost backup quarterbacks Gary Danielson and Mike Pagel after him.

As a result, Cleveland, a preseason Super Bowl contender, struggled to a 4-3 record, leading the AFC in defense, but averaging only 14.4 points a game on offense.

But Kosar returned against the Cardinals and threw two touchdown passes to Reggie Langhorne and one to Bolden on a tackle-eligible play as the Browns posted their highest point total of the season.

"Kosar did a good job," Cardinals safety Lonnie Young said. "He's intelligent. We were going to blitz him and bang him up, but he checked and checked at the line."

MIKE MOORE

Cleveland's offense once again was in the hands of Kosar, who led the Browns to a 29-21 victory.

Instead, the heavy rush came from the Browns' defense, which recorded six sacks, and knocked out Cardinals quarterback Neil Lomax with a bruised hip.

In Milwaukee, the Redskins also welcomed back their regular quarterback, Doug Williams, who had missed four games after an appendectomy. Williams teamed with running back Kelvin Bryant to lead Washington past resurgent Green Bay 20-17.

The Packers had surprised New England and Minnesota in successive weeks and almost picked off the Redskins, too. But Green Bay's Max Zendejas missed two field goals in the fourth quarter, one from 46 yards and one from 24 yards out with 11 seconds left that would have forced an overtime.

Williams threw two touchdown passes for the Redskins, while Bryant, who became a starter in week 7 for the first time in his Redskins career, caught nine passes (one for a touchdown) for 70 yards and ran for 140 more.

In Miami, Dan Marino passed for 521 yards—the second-highest total in NFL history—but he also threw five interceptions, and the Dolphins lost to the New York Jets 44-30.

"You can throw for 900 yards, but if you don't win, it doesn't matter," Marino said. "We hurt ourselves with interceptions."

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

PAUL JASIENSKI

Colts' Eric Dickerson

MANNY RUBIO

Saints' Rickey Jackson

AFC OFFENSE—Eric Dickerson, running back, Indianapolis
Dickerson rushed for 169 yards and caught four passes for 30 more to lead the Colts to a 16-0 shutout of the Chargers. Dickerson's big day boosted his career rushing total past 9,000 yards to 9,135, already the eighth-best figure in NFL history.

AFC DEFENSE—Mike Johnson, linebacker, Cleveland
Johnson intercepted passes at the Browns' 22- and 46-yard lines to break up Phoenix drives, and also made nine tackles in Cleveland's 29-21 victory over the Cardinals.

NFC OFFENSE—Wade Wilson, quarterback, Minnesota
Wilson passed for 335 yards and three touchdowns—two to tight end Steve Jordan—in Minnesota's 49-20 rout of Tampa Bay. Meanwhile, the Vikings' defense intercepted Tampa Bay's Vinny Testaverde six times and set up 28 points on turnovers.

NFC DEFENSE—Rickey Jackson, linebacker, New Orleans
Jackson made 10 tackles, 8 of them unassisted, stopped a Los Angeles Raiders drive with an interception at the Saints' 5, had a sack, and broke up a pass as the Saints stopped the Raiders 20-6.

CHRIS SCHWENK

Marino had the footballs flying all day, but too many landed in the hands of the New York Jets.

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	7	1	0
N.Y. Jets	4	3	1
Miami	4	4	0
Indianapolis	3	5	0
New England	3	5	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	7	1	0
Cleveland	5	3	0
Houston	5	3	0
Pittsburgh	2	6	0
AFC West			
Denver	4	4	0
Seattle	4	4	0
L.A. Raiders	3	5	0
San Diego	2	6	0
Kansas City	1	6	1

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	5	3	0
Washington	5	3	0
Philadelphia	4	4	0
Phoenix	4	4	0
Dallas	2	6	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	7	1	0
Minnesota	5	3	0
Detroit	2	6	0
Green Bay	2	6	0
Tampa Bay	2	6	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	7	1	0
L.A. Rams	6	2	0
San Francisco	5	3	0
Atlanta	1	7	0

SCORES

AFC
Buffalo 23, New England 20
Cincinnati 44, Houston 21
Indianapolis 16, San Diego 0
N.Y. Jets 44, Miami 30
Pittsburgh 39, Denver 21
NFC
Chicago 10, San Francisco 9
Minnesota 49, Tampa Bay 20
N.Y. Giants 23, Atlanta 16
Philadelphia 24, Dallas 23
Washington 20, Green Bay 17
Interconference
Cleveland 29, Phoenix 21
Detroit 7, Kansas City 6
L.A. Rams 31, Seattle 10
New Orleans 20, L.A. Raiders 6

QUOTE

MARY RUBIN

Chiefs cornerback **Kevin Ross**, angry after his team lost to Detroit 7-6:

"My mom could come in here and give a better effort than you saw today."

In coming close to Norm Van Brocklin's all-time record of 554 yards (against the New York Yanks in 1951), Marino completed 35 of 60 passes for three touchdowns, including two scoring passes to Mark Clayton.

But the Jets also got three touchdown passes from Ken O'Brien and scored 24 consecutive points in the second quarter to build a 30-10 halftime lead. In their second-period explosion, rookie safety Erik McMillan, who had three of the five interceptions, returned one of them 55 yards for a touchdown.

DAMIAN STROHMEYER

Lions running back James Jones helped out with 45 yards rushing as Detroit outlasted Kansas City 7-6.

In Chicago, there was a playoff atmosphere as the 49ers were riding an NFL-record-equaling 11-game road winning streak, and the Bears were out to avenge a 41-0 loss to San Francisco in 1987. Both teams played fiercely on defense, but the Bears' NFL-leading defensive unit was fiercest, and Chicago won 10-9.

"I've seen a lot of football, but I've never seen a better effort from a defense," Bears head coach Mike Ditka said.

The 49ers led the NFL in total offense, but, after scoring on their first series on a 23-yard pass from Joe Montana to Jerry Rice, they were stifled.

The Bears, who won their fifth straight game, scored on Jim McMahon's one-yard sneak and a field goal by Kevin Butler following an interception by Dave Duerson.

In losing, the 49ers found themselves two games behind the New Orleans Saints in the NFC West. The Saints, winning their seventh game in a row, stopped the Raiders 20-6 behind 250-pound rookie running back Craig (Ironhead) Heyward.

New Orleans trailed 6-3 at halftime, but Heyward bounced off the middle of the Raiders' line on the second half's first play, spun around, took off around right end, ran over Raiders cornerback Ron Fellows, and went 73 yards for a touchdown.

"A lot of people are deceived by me," Heyward said. "They think I'm not that fast. Then, when they see me, it's uh-oh."

Ironhead finished with 109 yards on 11 carries. The Raiders' Marcus Allen, playing with a cast to protect his broken left wrist, rushed for 102 yards.

In Philadelphia, quarterback Randall Cunningham used a no-huddle offense to

AL KOOISTRA

The Eagles' Cunningham compounded the Cowboys' woes, passing for 298 yards and two touchdowns.

march the Eagles 99 and 85 yards in the fourth quarter, and Philadelphia rallied to edge Dallas 24-23.

The winning drive, which went 15 plays in just 2:07, ended when Cunningham threw a two-yard touchdown pass to running back Anthony Toney with four seconds left. Luis Zendejas added the winning conversion.

In week 3, Buffalo's Scott Norwood beat New England on a 41-yard field goal with 11 seconds left. In week 8, he stopped the Patriots again 23-20 on a 33-yard field goal with 13 seconds left.

In Pittsburgh, the Steelers snapped a six-game losing streak with a 39-21 victory over the Denver Broncos. Gary Anderson kicked a club-record six field goals, and Rodney Carter rushed for 105 yards, including a 64-yard touchdown run. ◆

Everett's a Hit With Rams

BILL AMATUCCI

A passer comes of age.

After his latest big game, someone asked Rams quarterback Jim Everett if he could relate to another Los Angeles pitcher, Orel Hershiser of the world-champion Dodgers.

"No way," Everett said. "He doesn't have any 300-pounders chasing him when he throws the ball, trying to hurt his body."

The only people being hurt around Everett in recent weeks, however, were Rams opponents. On the eighth Sunday of the season, the third-year quarterback passed for three touchdowns for the third successive week to lead Los Angeles to an eased-up 31-10 victory over Seattle. Everett finished with 311 yards, a 20-for-27 batting record (if you'll pardon the expression), and no interceptions.

Halfway through the season, Everett was the second-ranked passer in the NFL with a 109.3 rating. He led the league in touchdown passes with 19, and had thrown only five interceptions. Most important, the Rams had a 6-2 record.

It was a long way from 1987, when he threw only 10 touchdown passes all season and had 13 interceptions in 11 games. His rating was 68.4, twenty-third in the NFL.

"Jim Everett seems to be getting better and better each week," said Henry Ellard, the Rams' leading receiver.

It was obvious that the 25-year-old Everett and offensive coordinator Ernie Zampese, who tutored Dan Fouts in San Diego before coming to the Rams in 1987, had developed a great working relationship.

"I'm sure Dan Fouts said the same thing," Everett said. "I'm glad I have a chance to work with him [Zampese]."

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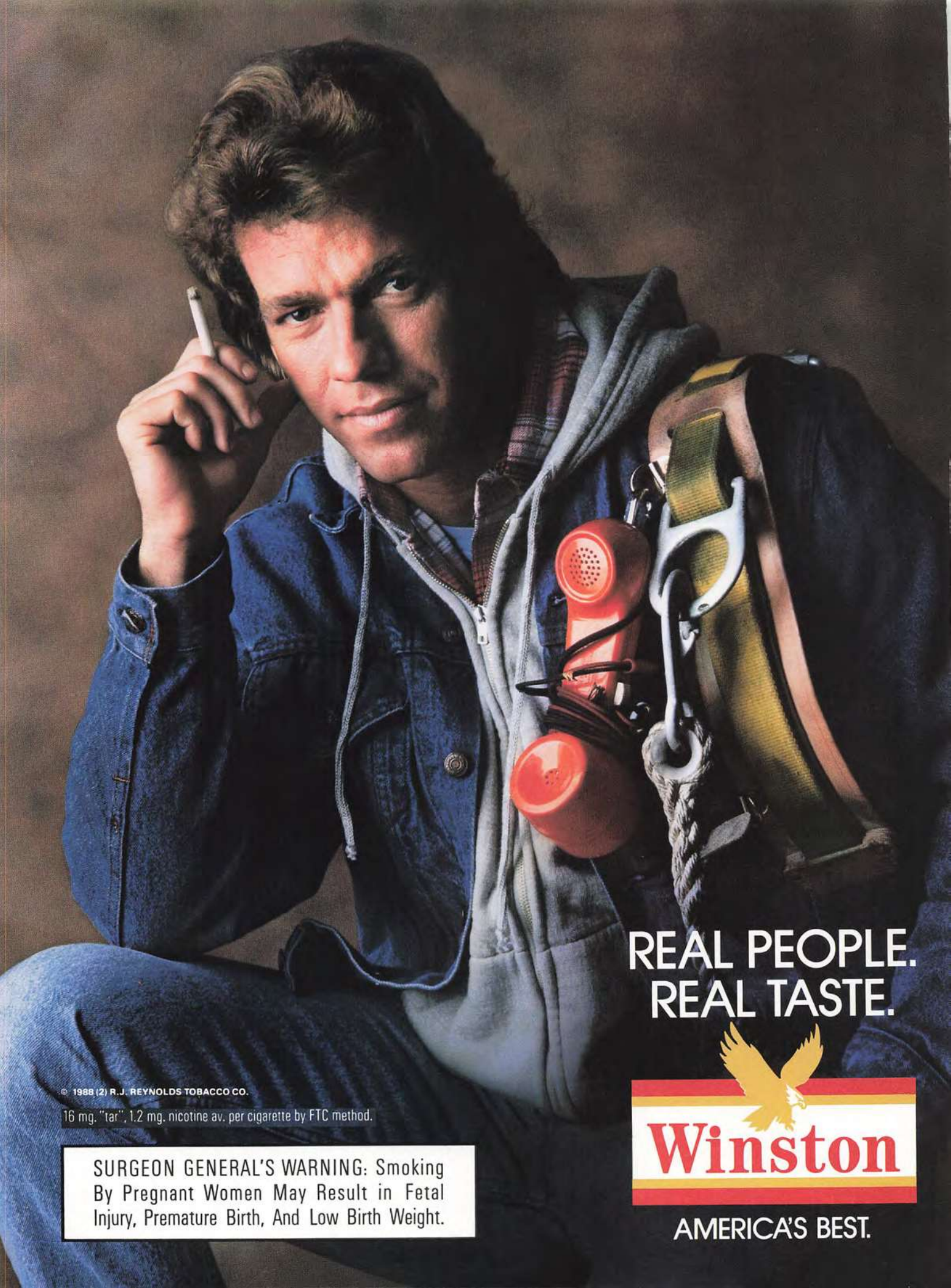

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WEEK 9 OCTOBER 30

ON HALLOWEEN NIGHT, Eric Dickerson was as easy to catch as a ghost.

Celebrating the first anniversary of his trade to Indianapolis, Dickerson rushed for 159 yards and four touchdowns to lead the Colts to a shocking 55-23 destruction of defending AFC champion Denver. In fact, the game wasn't as close as the score indicates. It was 55-10 early in the fourth quarter.

But the big game by Dickerson and the Colts on Monday Night Football was the culmination of a remarkable weekend for the AFC East, which turned in a 5-0 record. It was clear that whichever team won this division would have to earn it.

Sitting on top of the East with the best record in the NFL was Buffalo, which raised its record to 8-1 with a 28-0 rout of the Packers.

Next at 5-3-1 were the New York Jets, who held off the Steelers 24-20. Then came Miami (5-4), which scrambled by Tampa Bay 17-14, and finally the 4-5 Colts and Patriots, who had the two most impressive wins of all.

While the Colts capsized Denver, the Patriots snapped the Chicago Bears' five-game winning streak as Doug Flutie threw four touchdown passes against his old teammates in a stunning 30-7 triumph in Foxboro.

DON LARSON

Dickerson backed up his strong words, outracing the Broncos for 159 yards on national television.

In Indianapolis, Dickerson put extra pressure on himself the day before the game by telling a television interviewer that he thought he was the best running back in football and, if his career ended right now, the best ever.

"I was kind of nervous, and I never get nervous before a game," he said afterward, "but I felt we would have a good game. The offensive line blocked well."

In gaining 159 yards, Dickerson boosted his NFL-leading total to 1,038, giving him his sixth 1,000-yard season in six years. That tied him with Walter Payton and Franco Harris for the most in a row. His four touchdown runs—all in the first half—were for 12, 11, 1, and 41 yards.

From Earl of the Table to King of the Hill

MIKE MOORE

Like everyone else, Earl Ferrell of the Phoenix Cardinals enjoys a good meal. In his case, he often enjoys too many of them.

During his career, the Cardinals' fullback, who stands only 6 feet, has had a tendency to eat his way through the offseason. He was candid about this problem in training camp.

"Last year [1987] I came in at 253 pounds," he said, "and I've been known to come in at 260. But I saw the light, and I'm right at 242 now."

After nine weeks, the new, lighter Ferrell was having far and away the best season of his career. He was a big reason the Cardinals were second in the NFL in total offense.

With the team's three-time leading rusher, Stump Mitchell, sidelined for two weeks with a sprained ankle, the 30-year-old Ferrell had successive 110-yard games against Cleveland and Dallas, rallying the Cardinals from a 10-0 deficit to victory over the Cowboys in week 9. Against Dallas, he set up a field goal with a 47-yard run, then scored both of his team's touchdowns in the fourth quarter, catching a 14-yard pass from Neil Lomax and ramming a yard up the middle with 50 seconds left to win the game 16-10.

"When Earl's healthy and in shape, there isn't a better fullback in the league," Cardinals offensive line coach Tom Bresnahan said.

Coming into 1988, Ferrell's best single-season rushing total was 548 yards, but in roughly half a season he already had run for 642 and averaged 5.1 yards a carry. He stood fifth in NFL rushing and had 24 receptions.

"I've seen lots of fullbacks," said Phoenix linebacker E.J. Junior. "I don't think anybody is better than Earl right now."

The frisky Colts even got a 53-yard scoring pass from Gary Hogeboom to Bill Brooks out of the Wishbone formation.

Denver helped out by giving away fumbles on three successive series in the first half. Those fumbles set up 17 points and quickly boosted a seven-point lead to 24-0.

"This is as low as I've ever been in Denver," head coach Dan Reeves said. "I wish I had some answers."

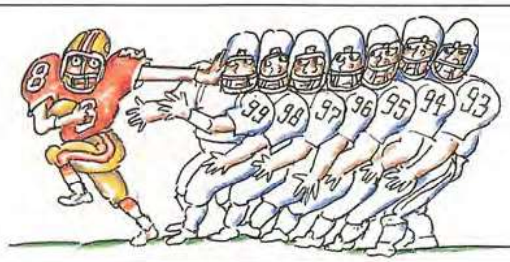
Also depressed was the Bears' Mike Ditka, who not only lost to the Patriots but also lost Jim McMahon, his quarterback, for four to six weeks with a strained ligament in his right knee. When McMahon went out early in the second quarter, the score was only 13-7, but things deteriorated after that.

"We were trying anything and nothing worked," Ditka

QUOTE

San Francisco quarterback **Steve Young**, discussing his game-winning, 49-yard touchdown run against the Vikings on which he eluded seven tacklers:

"I hope that whoever I straight-armed was on the other team."



MARY RUBIN

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	8	1	0
N.Y. Jets	5	3	1
Miami	5	4	0
Indianapolis	4	5	0
New England	4	5	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	7	2	0
Cleveland	6	3	0
Houston	6	3	0
Pittsburgh	2	7	0
AFC West			
Seattle	5	4	0
Denver	4	5	0
L.A. Raiders	4	5	0
San Diego	2	7	0
Kansas City	1	7	1

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	6	3	0
Phoenix	5	4	0
Washington	5	4	0
Philadelphia	4	5	0
Dallas	2	7	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	7	2	0
Minnesota	5	4	0
Detroit	2	7	0
Green Bay	2	7	0
Tampa Bay	2	7	0
NFC West			
L.A. Rams	7	2	0
New Orleans	7	2	0
San Francisco	6	3	0
Atlanta	2	7	0

SCORES

AFC
Cleveland 23, Cincinnati 16
Indianapolis 55, Denver 23
L.A. Raiders 17, Kansas City 10
N.Y. Jets 24, Pittsburgh 20
Seattle 17, San Diego 14
NFC
Atlanta 27, Philadelphia 24
L.A. Rams 12, New Orleans 10
N.Y. Giants 13, Detroit 10 (OT)
Phoenix 16, Dallas 10
San Francisco 24, Minnesota 21
Interconference
Buffalo 28, Green Bay 0
Houston 41, Washington 17
Miami 17, Tampa Bay 14
New England 30, Chicago 7

MICHAEL HEINZ

Bernie Kosar hit 18 of 28 passes for 210 yards, helping Cleveland tame the division-leading Bengals 23-16.

said. "It took enough of our concentration just to run a play, let alone try and compete with New England."

The 5-10 Flutie completed only 6 of 18 passes, but his first was an 80-yard scoring strike to Irving Fryar on the game's first play. Flutie also threw two touchdown passes to tight end Lin Dawson and one to Stanley Morgan. Rookie John Stephens ran for 124 yards.

At Buffalo, the Bills' defense scored two touchdowns and held the Packers to 131 total yards. Safety Mark Kelso returned an interception of a pass by Don Majkowski 78 yards for one touchdown, and defensive end Leon Seals returned a fumble seven yards for another. On offense, rookie Thurman Thomas ran for 116 yards.

Bills head coach Marv Levy didn't want his team to get complacent, however.

"A team is like a piece of fruit," he said. "Once it gets ripe, it starts getting rotten. We want to get better."

While Buffalo reached 8-1 and the Bears' record fell to 7-2, two other teams with 7-1 marks, New Orleans and Cincinnati, also lost.

In New Orleans, the Rams pulled into a first-place tie with the Saints in the NFC West by riding the bare foot of Mike Lansford to a 12-10 victory in the Superdome. The Rams never got into the end zone, but Lansford kicked four field goals to snap the Saints' seven-game winning streak.

"You've got to love kicking indoors," Lansford said. "Seventy-two degrees, no wind."

The Rams' defense also enjoyed playing indoors, stifling the Saints with just 33 yards rushing.

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

JOHN McDONOUGH

Oilers' Drew Hill

PAUL SPINELLI

Freddie Joe Nunn

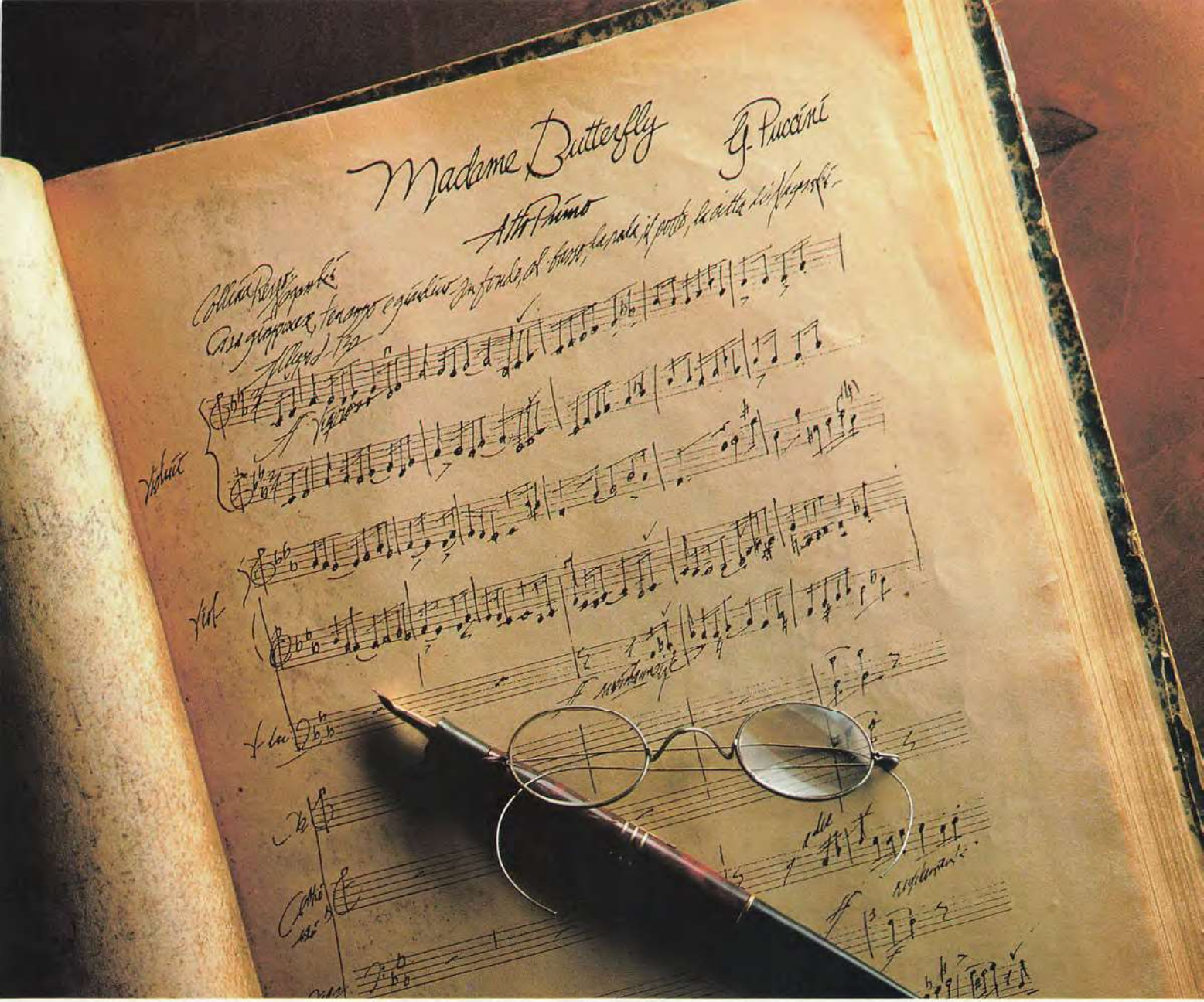
AFC OFFENSE—Drew Hill, wide receiver, Houston
Hill caught three touchdown passes from Warren Moon (for 22, 33, and 11 yards) to lead the Oilers to a 41-17 rout of the Redskins. Overall, Hill caught nine passes for 148 yards.
AFC DEFENSE—Cornelius Bennett, linebacker, Buffalo
Bennett had six tackles, including 2½ of his team's six sacks of Green Bay quarterback Don Majkowski, and also forced a fumble, recovered another fumble, and broke up a pass as Buffalo blanked the Packers 28-0.
NFC OFFENSE—Steve Young, quarterback, San Francisco
Young dropped back to pass, then scrambled all over the field on a 49-yard touchdown run with 1:58 left in the game to give the 49ers a 24-21 victory over the Vikings. He also passed for 232 yards and a touchdown and finished as the game's leading rusher with 72 yards.
NFC DEFENSE—Freddie Joe Nunn, end, Phoenix
Nunn sacked quarterback Steve Pelluer three times, made eight total tackles, and forced a fumble as the Cardinals rallied to defeat the Cowboys 16-10.

In Cleveland, the Browns moved to within a game of first-place Cincinnati in the AFC Central Division with a tense 23-16 victory over the Bengals. In winning their third straight, the Browns held the Bengals, the NFL's highest-scoring team, without an offensive touchdown.

Besides getting great defense, the Browns also got great special teams play. Cornerback Frank Minnifield blocked a punt by Scott Fulhage at the Bengals' 10, and Herman Fontenot picked up the ball at the 1 and scored. Fontenot also returned a kickoff 84 yards to the Bengals' 5-yard line to set up Cleveland's other touchdown.

In Houston, the Oilers also moved to within a game of the Bengals by overwhelming Washington 41-17. Warren Moon threw three touchdown passes to Drew Hill and ran for a touchdown, and the Oilers' defense set up 28 points with turnovers. End Ray Childress recovered three fumbles, two of them leading to touchdowns.

At the Meadowlands, the New York Jets got their first victory ever over the Steelers, winning 24-20 after having lost nine in a row. Rookie cornerback John Booty blocked a punt to set up one touchdown, recovered a muffed punt to set up another, and intercepted a pass to stop Pittsburgh's final drive. Jets linebacker Robin Cole, who was cut by the Steelers during the summer, had two sacks and recovered a fumble to set up another touchdown.

In Philadelphia, Chris Miller of Atlanta passed for three touchdowns, including a 49-yard, game-winning toss to rookie wide receiver Michael Haynes with 5:58 left, as the Falcons surprised the Eagles 27-24 and snapped a five-game losing streak. ◆

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WEEK 10 NOVEMBER 6

LATE IN THE THIRD quarter, the Cardinals trailed the 49ers 23-0. Late in the fourth quarter they had closed to 23-17 and marched all the way to San Francisco's 9-yard line.

Of course, there were only six seconds left.

No problem. Throwing out of the Shotgun, Neil Lomax zipped a pass to Roy Green in the back of the end zone, and, following Al Del Greco's conversion, the Cardinals had stunned the 49ers 24-23.

"It was a tough loss," 49ers head coach Bill Walsh said. "Losses like these are brutal and awful."

In the other locker room, Green was enjoying the experience.

"It was like Ted Williams saying how big a baseball looks when he hits it well," Green said. "When the ball came toward me, it looked so big that I knew I was going to catch it."

While Green and the Cardinals celebrated, the 49ers, Rams, and Saints all moped. The three NFC West teams, whose combined record was 20-7 in the first nine weeks, all lost in the last minute.

The Saints, who had won 10 road games in a row, were beaten in Washington 27-24 when rookie Chip Lohmiller kicked a 23-yard field goal with 47 seconds left.

The Rams, 5-0 on the road this season, staged a furious fourth-quarter rally in Philadelphia, but it failed when defensive tackle Jerome Brown pressured Jim Everett into an interception at the Eagles' 7 with 16 seconds left. Safety William Frizzell picked off the pass, and the Eagles won 30-24.

In Phoenix, the Cardinals had started their comeback against the 49ers late in the third quarter when Lomax and Green teamed on a 35-yard scoring play. For the day, Lomax passed for 323 yards and three touchdowns.

MIKE MOORE

The Cardinals' defense was stingy, limiting Steve Young and the 49ers to 117 net passing yards.

QUOTE

MARV RUBIN

Giants guard **Billy Ard**, asked how he realized linebacker Lawrence Taylor wasn't badly hurt when he strained a shoulder muscle against Dallas:

"He was practicing his golf swing in the shower after the game."

The winning drive went 66 yards, with Lomax's 15- and 25-yard throws to rookie wide receiver Ernie Jones setting up the winning touchdown.

The 49ers lost despite 162 yards on the ground from Roger Craig and seven sacks of Lomax by the defense. Fourteen San Francisco penalties didn't help.

The Saints led the Redskins 24-17 at the start of the fourth quarter, but Doug Williams directed 94- and 64-yard drives for the tying touchdown and winning field goal.

New Orleans had a chance to send the game into overtime, but Morten Andersen, who had made 18 of his first 21 field-goal attempts this year, was short on a 49-yard try with four seconds left. It was the Saints' third loss by a total of six points.

"It's very frustrating," said

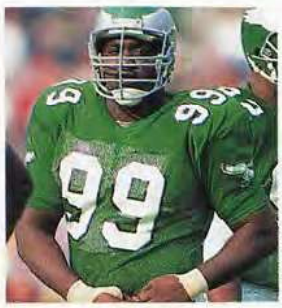
SCOTT CUNNINGHAM

Doug Williams tied it for Washington when he scored on a one-yard run 22 seconds before halftime.

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

JOHN BIEVER

Bengals' Eddie Brown



AL MESSERSCHMIDT

Eagles' Jerome Brown

AFC OFFENSE—Eddie Brown, wide receiver, Cincinnati
Brown caught seven passes for a club record-tying 216 yards and two touchdowns in the Bengals' 42-7 blitz of the Steelers. He had an 86-yard catch for a touchdown on Cincinnati's second play. Meanwhile, rookie Ickey Woods rushed for 110 yards on 10 carries.

AFC DEFENSE—Johnny Rembert, linebacker, New England
Rembert made 18 tackles, 12 of them solos, and broke up a pass as the Patriots stifled Miami 21-10.

NFC OFFENSE—Doug Williams, quarterback, Washington
Williams passed for 299 yards and two touchdowns, scored another, and rallied the Redskins to a 27-24 victory over New Orleans.

NFC DEFENSE—Jerome Brown, tackle, Philadelphia
Brown forced a fumble to set up a field goal, intercepted a pass to set up a touchdown, deflected another pass, and made five tackles as the Eagles stopped the Rams 30-24. Brown also pressured Jim Everett into an interception with 16 seconds left to stop the Rams' final drive.

Saints wide receiver Eric Martin, who had 10 catches for 146 yards and a score. "We needed this win."

In Philadelphia, Randall Cunningham passed for 323 yards and three touchdowns —two to rookie tight end Keith Jackson—to help the Eagles to a 27-10 lead over the Rams early in the fourth quarter.

But Everett, who passed for 377 yards himself, got hot, and the Rams scored twice and were driving again when they fell short. Henry Ellard had a big day for Los Angeles with seven catches for 166 yards and a touchdown.

In Chicago, head coach Mike Ditka, who had suffered a mild heart attack earlier in the week, watched on television from his hospital room as the Bears dominated Tampa Bay 28-10.

Vince Tobin, the defensive coordinator, coached the team. Also missing was injured quarterback Jim McMahon, who watched Mike Tomczak pass for 269 yards and two touchdowns. Ditka called Tobin and Tomczak to congratulate them after the game.

"Mike was pretty happy with the way I played," said Tomczak, who has heard a few screams from Ditka in the past.

In Seattle, Buffalo's defense, leading the AFC in fewest points allowed, held the Seahawks to 145 yards, 10 first downs, and 3 points as Buffalo won 13-3. The Bills, with the NFL's best record (9-1), won their fifth in a row.

Robb Riddick rushed for 75 yards and the game's only touchdown, and set up his own score with a 26-yard halfback pass to Flip Johnson.

"We're unbeatable right now," Riddick said. "We've got guys doing whatever it takes to win."

In the Meadowlands, the NFC East-leading Giants took a 26-0 halftime lead over Dallas as Phil Simms threw two scoring passes to Stephen Baker, and linebacker Lawrence Taylor forced two fumbles that set up touchdowns.

But in the second half the Cowboys found a quarterback —Kevin Sweeney—who last played in the final replacement game in 1987. Sweeney fired touchdown passes to three different receivers and Dallas came flying back before losing 29-21.

Despite Sweeney's heroics, the Cowboys' record fell to 2-8. Their six-game losing streak was their longest since 1960, when they were 0-11-1 as an expansion team.

In Houston, the Oilers won their showdown with the Browns for second place in the AFC Central, jumping to a 21-3 lead and winning 24-17. Mike Rozier rushed for 76 yards and a touchdown to lead Houston on the ground, and Ernest Givins caught six passes from Warren Moon for 89 yards and another score.

In defeat, Ozzie Newsome caught five passes and finished the game with 600 career catches. He was sixth in NFL receiving history.

The Raiders pulled into a three-way tie with Seattle and Denver for first in the AFC West with a 13-3 victory over the Chargers, who lost their sixth game in a row. Steve Beuerlein threw a seven-yard touchdown pass to tight end Trey Junkin to snap a 3-3 tie in the fourth quarter. ◆

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	9	1	0
N.Y. Jets	5	4	1
Indianapolis	5	5	0
Miami	5	5	0
New England	5	5	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	8	2	0
Cleveland	6	4	0
Houston	6	4	0
Pittsburgh	2	8	0
AFC West			
Denver	5	5	0
L.A. Raiders	5	5	0
Seattle	5	5	0
San Diego	2	8	0
Kansas City	1	8	1

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	7	3	0
Phoenix	6	4	0
Washington	6	4	0
Philadelphia	5	5	0
Dallas	2	8	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	8	2	0
Minnesota	6	4	0
Detroit	2	8	0
Green Bay	2	8	0
Tampa Bay	2	8	0
NFC West			
L.A. Rams	7	3	0
New Orleans	7	3	0
San Francisco	6	4	0
Atlanta	3	7	0

SCORES

AFC
Buffalo 13, Seattle 3
Cincinnati 42, Pittsburgh 7
Denver 17, Kansas City 11
Houston 24, Cleveland 17
Indianapolis 38, N.Y. Jets 14
L.A. Raiders 13, San Diego 3
New England 21, Miami 10
NFC
Atlanta 20, Green Bay 0
Chicago 28, Tampa Bay 10
Minnesota 44, Detroit 17
N.Y. Giants 29, Dallas 21
Philadelphia 30, L.A. Rams 24
Phoenix 24, San Francisco 23
Washington 27, New Orleans 24

BRUCE DIERDORFF

Bears' Vince Tobin

RICHARD GENTILE

Anthony Toney toiled for the Eagles, gaining 46 yards on the ground and 45 more on five pass receptions.

When One of a Kind Is a Royal Purple Flush

PAUL JASIENSKI

The most spectacular player in the 1987 playoffs was Anthony Carter of the Minnesota Vikings, who set 18 team and league playoff records and caught 23 passes in three games.

After 10 weeks of the 1988 season, Carter still was loose in opposing secondaries. The Lions, for example, hoped they'd never see him again.

As Minnesota trampled Detroit 44-17 in Minneapolis, Carter caught eight passes for a regular-season career-high 188 yards. Remarkably, he set up *five* touchdowns with catches of 32, 40, 28, 26, and 17 yards.

Most of his receptions came within 10 yards of the line of scrimmage. He then turned them into big plays.

"Anthony is considered a legend in the Big Ten," Vikings general manager Mike Lynn said. "If he continues to play at this level, he'll be thought of in the same way in the NFL.

"He's a gamebreaker—one of the best in the business today."

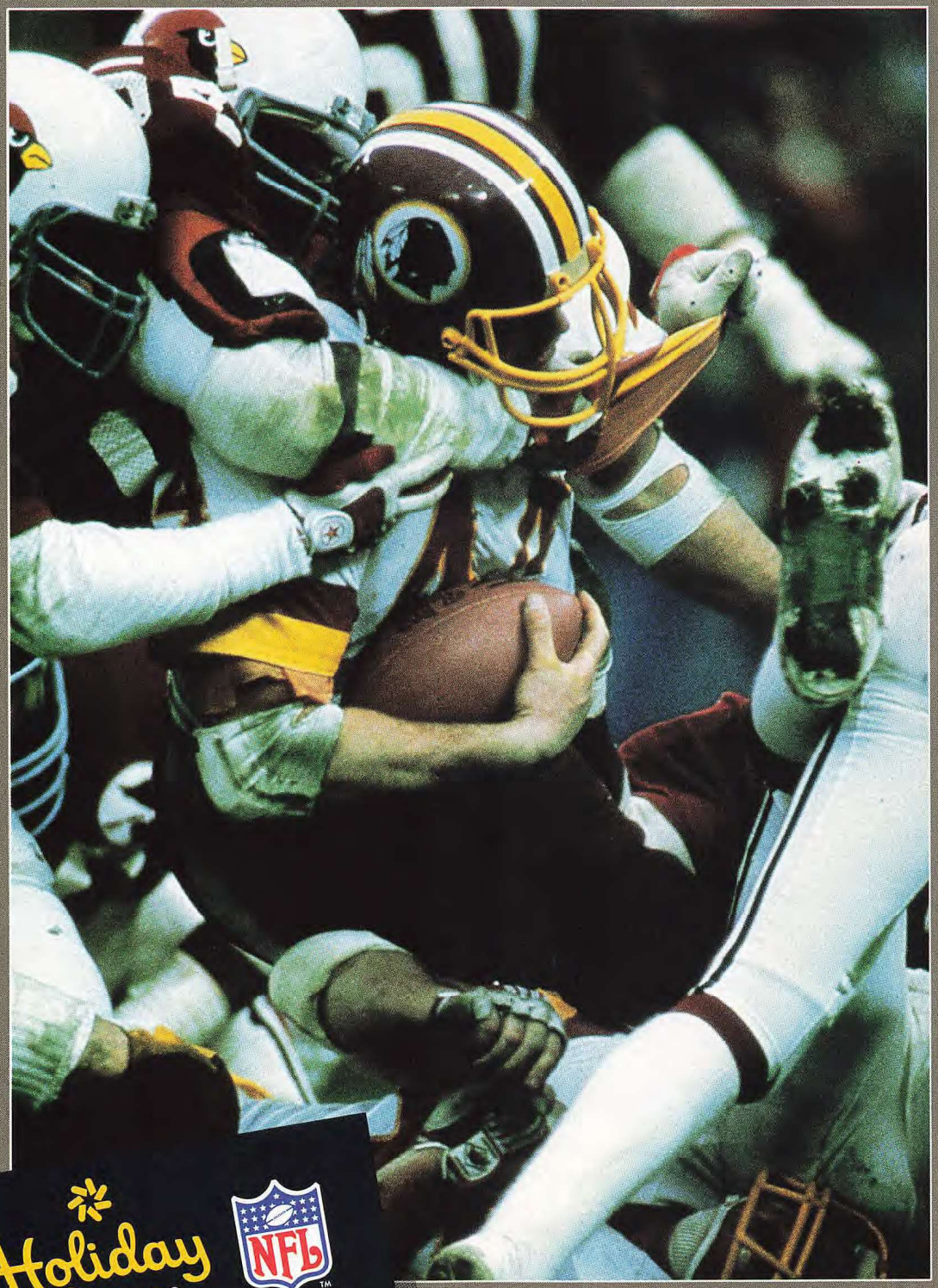
Head coach Jerry Burns seconded the notion.

"His ability in the open field is as good as any wide receiver I've ever seen," Burns said.

Carter had a big ally against the Lions. Wade Wilson completed 28 of 35 passes for a career-high 391 yards and completed 14 in a row in the second half. As Wilson, Carter, and the Vikings continued their playoff drive, Carter already had 44 catches for the season, one more than his previous NFL high. And he was averaging 19.7 yards a catch.

"This guy," Burns said, "is the kind of football player I've never seen before."

ELBOW ROOM



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WEEK 11 NOVEMBER 13

IN THE FIRST 10 WEEKS of the season, the Kansas City Chiefs had been in a state of depression. They lost six games by a total of 19 points —three of them by one point —and had the poorest record in the NFL, 1-8-1.

Cincinnati, on the other hand, had won 8 of its first 10 games and looked like a Super Bowl team.

In week 11, the two teams collided in Kansas City... and you know how this goes, don't you? The Chiefs won.

Kansas City had to overcome a 12-point deficit to do it, winning 31-28 when Nick Lowery kicked a 39-yard field goal—his fifth of the game—with two seconds left. It was Lowery's nineteenth field goal in 20 tries this season.

Chiefs head coach Frank Gansz was so excited he got a little carried away.

"We played probably one of the best football teams in the history of the game," Gansz said.

The head coach of that team, Sam Wyche, was not happy.

"We feel sick in there," Wyche said, gesturing toward his locker room. "We've lost all of our momentum. We've got to start it over again."

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

PRM

Chargers' Gary Anderson

HERB WEITMAN

Cardinals' Roy Green

AFC OFFENSE—Gary Anderson, running back, San Diego
Anderson ran for 145 yards and caught five passes to lead the Chargers to a 10-7 victory over Atlanta. With San Diego facing third-and-12 with a minute left, Anderson ran 26 yards for the first down that enabled his team to run out the clock.

AFC DEFENSE—Albert Lewis, cornerback, Kansas City
In the fourth quarter, Lewis blocked a punt out of the end zone for a safety and recovered a fumble on the Cincinnati 28 to set up the winning field goal as the Chiefs stunned the Bengals 31-28. He also made four tackles and knocked down two passes.

NFC OFFENSE—Roy Green, wide receiver, Phoenix
Green caught nine passes for 176 yards, including one of 44 yards for a touchdown, as the Cardinals moved into a first-place tie in the NFC East with a 24-17 victory over the New York Giants. Neil Lomax passed for 353 yards and two touchdowns before leaving with a sprained knee that figured to sideline him at least two weeks.

NFC DEFENSE—Vestee Jackson, cornerback, Chicago
Jackson intercepted two passes, deflected three more, and made seven tackles as the Bears stifled Washington 34-14.

The frustrated Bengals led 28-16 after Stanford Jennings's team-record 98-yard kickoff return for a touchdown in the third quarter, but the Chiefs came back to score 15 successive points to win.

After a field goal, the lead was cut to 28-21 when Kansas City cornerback Albert Lewis blocked a punt out of the end zone for a safety with 6:06 left. Then the Chiefs drove 64 yards to tie the game on Christian Okoye's one-yard run with 1:11 left.

On the next kickoff, James Saxon stripped Cincinnati's Marc Logan of the ball, and Lewis fell on it on the Bengals' 28. Four plays later, Lowery kicked his game-winning field goal.

The Chiefs were just one of five AFC West teams to win, including Seattle, Denver, and the Los Angeles Raiders, who stayed in a three-way tie for first. The Chiefs-Bengals game also was one of six decided in the last minute.

In Seattle, the Seahawks welcomed back veteran quarterback Dave Krieg, who had missed seven games with a separated shoulder, and he directed them to a 27-24 victory over Houston. Krieg drove Seattle 52 yards in the last five minutes to set up Norm Johnson for the winning 46-yard field goal with one second left.

"I'm just excited about Dave coming back and playing," fullback John L. Williams said.

Williams was excited enough to run for 102 yards on 13 carries, including the 44-yard touchdown run that tied the score at 24-24.

In San Francisco, the Raiders won their third in a row when they turned back a late 49ers drive for a surprising 9-3 victory. San Francisco

GEORGE ROSE

Bo Jackson rushed for 85 yards as the Raiders handed San Francisco its second straight loss.

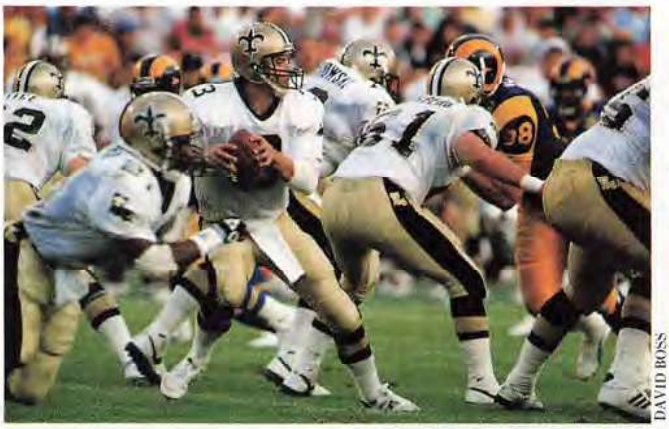
STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	10	1	0
Indianapolis	6	5	0
New England	6	5	0
N.Y. Jets	5	5	1
Miami	5	6	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	8	3	0
Houston	7	4	0
Cleveland	6	5	0
Pittsburgh	2	9	0
AFC West			
Denver	6	5	0
L.A. Raiders	6	5	0
Seattle	6	5	0
San Diego	3	8	0
Kansas City	2	8	1

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	7	4	0
Phoenix	7	4	0
Philadelphia	6	5	0
Washington	6	5	0
Dallas	2	9	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	9	2	0
Minnesota	7	4	0
Tampa Bay	3	8	0
Detroit	2	9	0
Green Bay	2	9	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	8	3	0
L.A. Rams	7	4	0
San Francisco	6	5	0
Atlanta	3	8	0

SCORES

AFC
Buffalo 31, Miami 6
Denver 30, Cleveland 7
Kansas City 31, Cincinnati 28
New England 14, N.Y. Jets 13
Seattle 27, Houston 24
NFC
Chicago 34, Washington 14
Minnesota 43, Dallas 3
New Orleans 14, L.A. Rams 10
Phoenix 24, N.Y. Giants 17
Tampa Bay 23, Detroit 20
Interconference
Indianapolis 20, Green Bay 13
L.A. Raiders 9, San Francisco 3
Philadelphia 27, Pittsburgh 24
San Diego 10, Atlanta 7



DAVID BOSS

The Saints' Bobby Hebert kept the Rams off balance, completing passes to nine different receivers.

had a fourth-and-two play on the Los Angeles 20 with 1:56 left, but Raiders rookie defensive end Scott Davis threw Jerry Rice for a seven-yard loss on a reverse, and the Raiders ran out the clock.

End Mike Wise helped out by sacking Joe Montana twice and recovering a fumble to set up the last of Chris Bahr's three field goals.

It was surprisingly easy, however, for the Broncos, who recorded their tenth consecutive victory over Cleveland, a 30-7 rout in Denver. The Broncos scored on all six of their first-half possessions for a 30-0 lead, with four turnovers setting up 20 points. The defense sacked Bernie Kosar six times, including 2½ by linebacker Simon Fletcher, who also forced a fumble and recovered one.

DAMIAN STROHMEYER

Denver sacked Cleveland quarterback Bernie Kosar six times and shut out the Browns until late in the game.

In the battle for first place in the NFC West, the Saints took over sole possession of the lead with a nervous 14-10 victory over the Rams. New Orleans dominated most of the game, but led only 14-10 when the Rams drove to the Saints' 16 with time running out.

After a penalty pushed L.A. back to the 26, Jim Everett passed into the end zone, where safety Gene Atkins intercepted with 50 seconds left. It was the second week in a row the Rams lost a chance to win when Everett was intercepted in the last minute.

Three other games also were decided in the last minute. In Green Bay, Colts defensive end Harvey Armstrong, who earlier had recovered a fumble to set up a touchdown and made two sacks, knocked down a pass by Don Majkowski from the Indianapolis 2 on the game's last play—and the Colts hung on to win 20-13. It was their fifth straight victory.

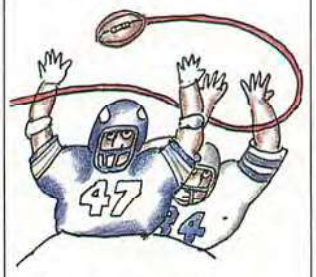
In the Silverdome, Donald Igwebuike kicked a 52-yard field goal with 10 seconds left to give Tampa Bay a 23-20 victory over Detroit. Field goals by Igwebuike in the last 12 seconds had given the Buccaneers all three of their victories this season.

After the game, Lions head coach Darryl Rogers was fired and replaced by defensive coordinator Wayne Fontes.

In Pittsburgh, the Steelers' Gary Anderson already had kicked four field goals, including one of 52 yards, but his 57-yard attempt on the game's last play was blocked by Clyde Simmons as the Eagles held on to beat the Steelers 27-26.

Wide receiver Louis Lipps had a spectacular game for the Steelers, catching six passes for 171 yards, including one of 89 yards for a touchdown from Bubby Brister. He also threw a 13-yard touchdown pass to running back Merril Hoge and ran once for 11 yards. ♦

QUOTE



MARV RUBIN

Cowboys quarterback **Kevin Sweeney**, who threw four interceptions in a 43-3 loss to Minnesota:

"I was wishing I had a yo-yo string on some of my passes so I could pull them back."

Why They Call Him 'Iron Mike'

SCOTT CUNNINGHAM

Ditka plays it cool.

Eleven days earlier, Mike Ditka had a mild heart attack, but now he was standing on the sideline with his doctor as the Bears went out to play Washington.

Defensive coordinator Vince Tobin was Chicago's acting head coach for the second successive week, but the Bears knew Ditka was there.

"He doesn't have to stand up and coach—he has a tremendous presence," safety Dave Duerson said.

Under Ditka's watchful eye, the Bears took a 20-0 halftime lead and went on to hammer the Redskins 34-14. It was sweet revenge for losses to Washington in both the 1986 and 1987 playoffs.

"The last two times they beat us they deserved to win, but today we outplayed them," linebacker Mike Singletary said.

Mike Tomczak, starting his second game for injured Jim McMahon, passed for 229 yards and a touchdown and sneaked a yard for another score. Neal Anderson ran 50 yards for a touchdown and caught four passes for 51 yards. The defense held the Redskins to 28 yards rushing and intercepted five passes.

While Ditka, who sat on the bench to rest in the second quarter, watched the Bears, his wife Diana watched him.

"I thought he did very well," she said. "He behaved like a perfect gentleman."

"I think it's only natural that I'm going to get excited," Ditka said. "That's the kind of guy I am. But I can promise you this—you'll never see me yelling or screaming anymore. That's over."

His sabbatical also was over. The next day he was back in the Bears' offices as head coach.

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WEEK 12 NOVEMBER 20

SECONDS AFTER THE Buffalo Bills had defeated the New York Jets to clinch the AFC East championship, thousands of Bills fans swarmed across the field and tore down both goal posts.

Over the years, those fans had suffered through more than long, bleak winters in Buffalo. In 18 years since the AFL-NFL merger, the Bills had won just one AFC East title (1980). As recently as 1984 and 1985, the team had back-to-back 2-14 records.

But now, after Scott Norwood's 30-yard field goal had stopped the Jets 9-6 in overtime, Buffalo had the NFL's best record (11-1), had won seven games in a row, and had clinched a division crown earlier than any other AFC team since the advent of the 16-game schedule in 1978.

"It was worth waiting for," Bills owner Ralph Wilson said. "In some ways, it was more rewarding than in 1980, because this team has never let down."

On the cold, rainy day they clinched the title, the Bills again refused to let down. They were locked in a 6-6 fourth-quarter tie with time running out when nose tackle Fred Smerlas saved the game.

ROB MCELROY

The goal posts were innocent victims when Bills fans celebrated their first division title since 1980.

With 25 seconds left, the Jets' Pat Leahy tried a potential game-winning 40-yard field goal, but Smerlas blocked it.

"I couldn't believe it," linebacker Cornelius Bennett said. "It was a miracle."

The Jets won the overtime coin flip, but, on their second play, fullback Roger Vick was stripped of the ball by cornerback Derrick Burroughs, and it was recovered on the New York 32 by Bennett. The Bills then moved 20 yards to set up Norwood for his third field goal of the game.

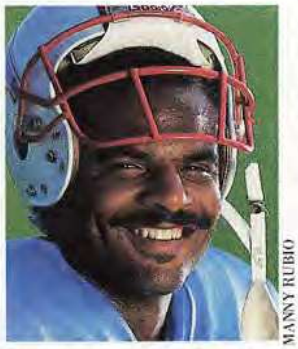
The Bills rushed for 229 yards—103 by Robb Riddick and 88 by rookie Thurman Thomas. And the smothering performance by the defense meant Buffalo had allowed just 15 points in its last four games.

Three other division leaders continued their drives for the playoffs, and two of them—the Saints and Bengals—won impressively.

Playing in the Superdome, New Orleans scored on its first three possessions and routed Denver 42-0 as Bobby Hebert completed 20 of 23 passes for three touchdowns. It was the Saints' largest victory margin ever.

"This was just one of those days when everything clicked," head coach Jim Mora said. "I would never

Moon Lights Up Houston



MANNY RUBIO

Houston's celestial body

On Friday, Houston quarterback Warren Moon celebrated his thirty-second birthday. On Sunday, he celebrated again, leading the Oilers past Phoenix 38-20.

As his team stayed a game behind Cincinnati in the AFC Central, Moon passed for a season-high 266 yards and three touchdowns, ran for another score, and inspired quarterbacks coach June Jones to talk about his performance.

"I don't think there's a guy around who has played as well as Warren the past several weeks," Jones said. "He is deserving of going to the Pro Bowl, but because his stats don't appear in the league stats every week, no one knows how well he's doing. It's a shame."

Moon's statistics were a well-kept secret because he missed five games after fracturing the shoulder blade in his throwing arm in the first week. Since his return, however, he had passed for 12 touchdowns and suffered only four interceptions.

Against the Cardinals, he threw 30- and 13-yard scoring passes to Ernest Givins and a 50-yard strike to Drew Hill.

"He means so much to our team," Hill said. "I've said it before—he's our leader. When he plays well, we play well."

Unfortunately for the Cardinals they were without *their* leader against Houston as quarterback Neil Lomax sat out with a knee injury. The Oilers understood how they felt.

QUOTE

MARV RUBIN

Bills head coach **Marv Levy**, who has a master's degree in history from Harvard, after his team became the first to clinch a playoff spot: "We liberated Paris, but it's 600 miles to Berlin."

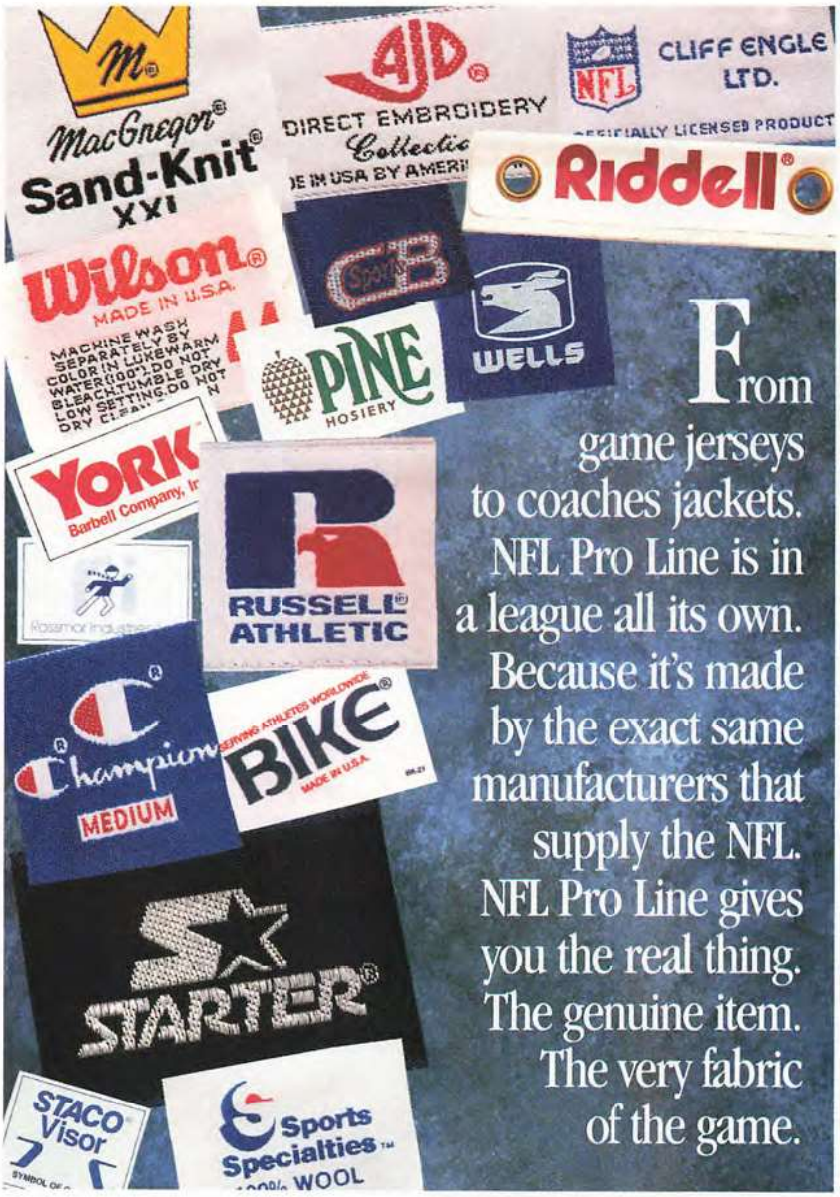
STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	11	1	0
New England	7	5	0
Indianapolis	6	6	0
N.Y. Jets	5	6	1
Miami	5	7	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	9	3	0
Houston	8	4	0
Cleveland	7	5	0
Pittsburgh	2	10	0
AFC West			
Denver	6	6	0
L.A. Raiders	6	6	0
Seattle	6	6	0
San Diego	4	8	0
Kansas City	3	8	1

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	7	5	0
Philadelphia	7	5	0
Phoenix	7	5	0
Washington	6	6	0
Dallas	2	10	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	10	2	0
Minnesota	8	4	0
Detroit	3	9	0
Tampa Bay	3	9	0
Green Bay	2	10	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	9	3	0
L.A. Rams	7	5	0
San Francisco	7	5	0
Atlanta	4	8	0

SCORES

AFC
Buffalo 9, N.Y. Jets 6 (OT)
Cleveland 27, Pittsburgh 7
Kansas City 27, Seattle 24
New England 6, Miami 3
NFC
Chicago 27, Tampa Bay 15
Detroit 19, Green Bay 9
Philadelphia 23, N.Y. Giants 17 (OT)
San Francisco 37, Washington 21
Interconference
Atlanta 12, L.A. Raiders 6
Cincinnati 38, Dallas 24
Houston 38, Phoenix 20
Minnesota 12, Indianapolis 3
New Orleans 42, Denver 0
San Diego 38, L.A. Rams 24



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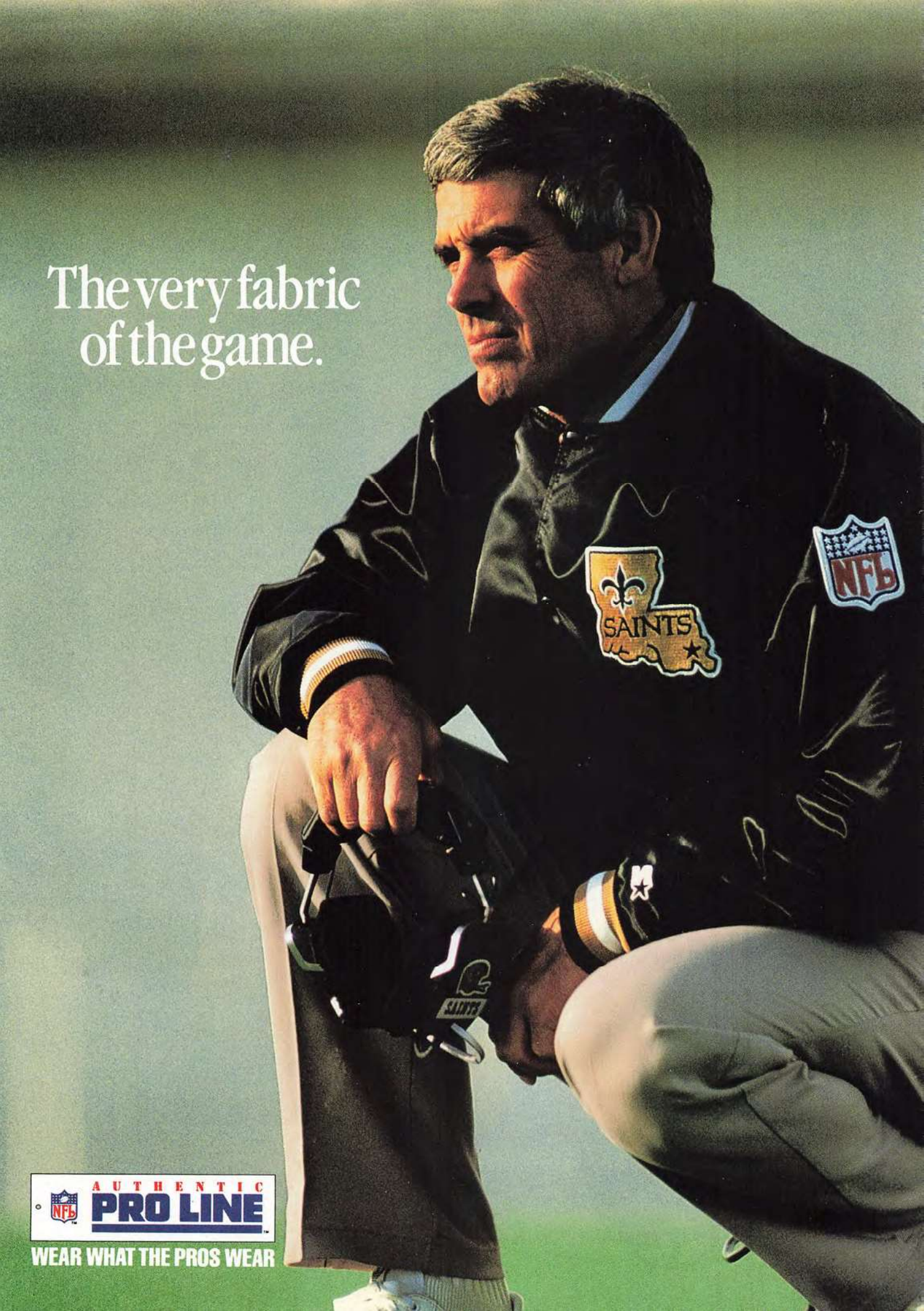
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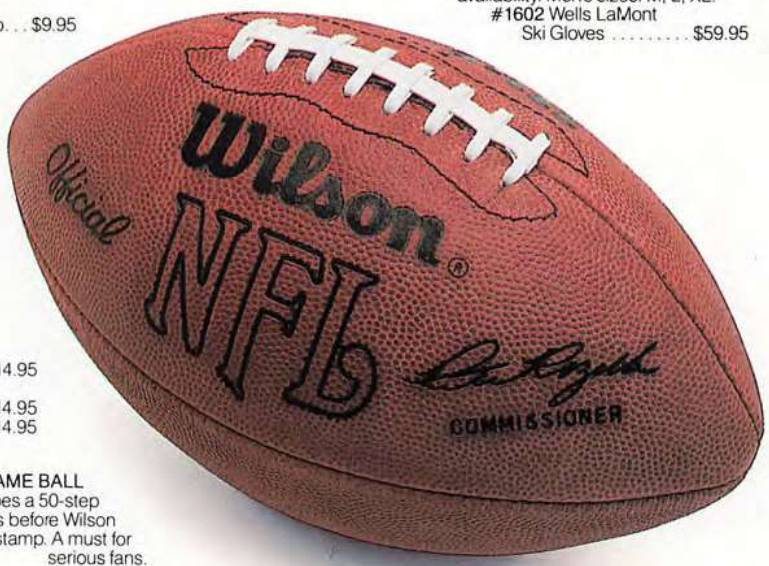

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DAMIAN STROHMEYER

The Seahawks were upended by Kansas City for the seventh straight time in Arrowhead Stadium.

have thought that we could beat Denver 42-0."

Two of Hebert's scoring passes went to Eric Martin, who had eight catches for 111 yards. In addition, Rueben Mayes ran for 115 yards and a touchdown, and Mel Gray returned a punt 66 yards for another score.

In Texas, the Bengals, who led the NFL in total offense, cruised past Dallas 38-24. It was the Cowboys' eighth consecutive loss.

Boomer Esiason passed for three touchdowns, including two to tight end Rodney Holman, while James Brooks rushed for 148 yards and scored twice. The Bengals also sacked Dallas quarterbacks Kevin Sweeney and Steve Pelluer six times.

The division-leading Bears also kept rolling, stopping Tampa Bay 27-15. Bears head coach Mike Ditka was back coaching on the sideline two and a half weeks after his heart attack.

Neal Anderson ran for two touchdowns, rookie Brad Muster ran 40 yards to score with a screen pass from Mike Tomczak, and the Bears' defense set up a touchdown and two field goals by forcing three turnovers.

The NFC East was thrown into a three-way tie for first among the Eagles, Giants, and Cardinals when Philadelphia defeated New York 23-17 in a most unlikely way.

In overtime, the Eagles' Luis Zendejas put his foot into a 31-yard field goal on third down that could have won the game. . .but it was blocked by Giants linebacker Lawrence Taylor.

The ball bounced once . . .and into the arms of 6-6, 276-pound Clyde Simmons of the Eagles. He carried it 15 yards to the end zone for the winning score.

"I heard a thud, the sound of the ball being blocked," Simmons said. "I looked around for it, and then once I spotted it, I picked it up and ran."

Safety Terry Hoage had two interceptions for the Eagles, including one in overtime that set up the strange winning play.

Kansas City continued to be an inhospitable place for visitors. In September, the Chiefs upset Denver at home. In week 11, they shaded Cincinnati on Nick Lowery's 39-yard field goal with two seconds left. And, in week 12, they edged Seattle 27-24 on Lowery's 40-yard field goal with 46 seconds left.

In Anaheim, the Rams also were shocked by a struggling AFC West team, losing to the Chargers 38-24.

San Diego wide receiver Anthony Miller returned a kickoff 93 yards for a touchdown and caught a 49-yard bomb from Mark Malone to set up another score. Malone, who replaced starting quarterback Mark Vlasic (knee injury in the third quarter), guided the Chargers to a pair of fourth-quarter scores.

DAVID DRAPKIN

The Eagles used a freak play to trade in a field goal for a touchdown and a 23-17 overtime victory over the Giants.

San Diego also scored on a 75-yard, two-man fumble return. Linebacker Keith Browner started the play by catching Charles White's fumble in the air at his own 25. He returned it to the 50, then lateraled to cornerback Sam Seale, who ran the rest of the way.

In Milwaukee, interim head coach Wayne Fontes made his debut for the Lions and coached his team to a 19-9 victory over the Packers as Eddie Murray kicked four field goals.

In Minneapolis, the Vikings' defense—with cornerback Carl Lee getting two interceptions and end Chris Doleman two sacks—stifled the Colts 12-3. Minnesota held Eric Dickerson to just 18 yards in his last 13 carries and 72 yards in all, while Chuck Nelson kicked four field goals. The loss snapped the Colts' five-game winning streak. ♦

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

LARRY FULLERTON

Bengals' James Brooks

BRIAN DRAKE

Falcons' Aundray Bruce

AFC OFFENSE—James Brooks, running back, Cincinnati
Brooks dashed 51 yards for one touchdown, caught a 13-yard pass from Boomer Esiason for another, and finished with 148 yards on 16 carries in the Bengals' 38-24 victory over Dallas.

AFC DEFENSE—Fred Smerlas, nose tackle, Buffalo
Smerlas blocked a field-goal attempt with 25 seconds left to send the game into overtime and also had five tackles and a sack in the Bills' 9-6 victory over the New York Jets.

NFC OFFENSE—Bobby Hebert, quarterback, New Orleans
Hebert completed 20 of 23 passes for three touchdowns to lead the Saints to a 42-0 rout of Denver.

NFC DEFENSE—Aundray Bruce, linebacker, Atlanta
Bruce had two sacks, four other tackles, two pass deflections, and an interception in the Falcons' 12-6 surprise of the Raiders. He also forced and recovered the fumble that set up John Settle's game-winning touchdown.

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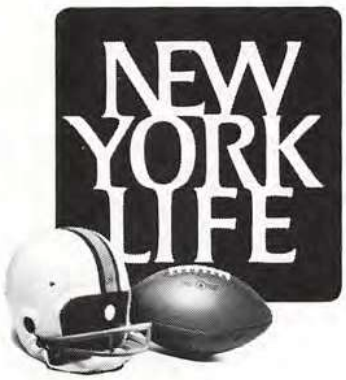

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WEEK 13 NOVEMBER 24

WITH THREE WEEKS TO go, the battle for NFL playoff spots still looked like a Christmas rush.

Nineteen teams were battling for the eight playoff berths, with two others, Buffalo and Chicago, already in but scrambling for home-field advantage.

The Bills, who won the AFC East title in week 12, had a chance to assure themselves the home field throughout the playoffs with a victory over Cincinnati. But the AFC Central-leading Bengals, playing at home, jumped to a 21-0 lead and held on to win 35-21. In so doing, they snapped Buffalo's seven-game winning streak.

"This was not a coaches' victory, it was a players' victory," Bengals head coach Sam Wyche said.

As usual, Cincinnati had a lot of key players on offense.

Ickey Woods ran for 129 yards and three short touchdowns, raising his season total to 13 scores, a team record for rookies. James Brooks rushed for 93 yards and scored two touchdowns, one on a 13-yard pass from Boomer Esiason. And Esiason, the NFL's leading passer, completed 18 of 25 attempts and directed an offense that had no turnovers.

MICHAEL HEINZ

The Bengals more than doubled the Bills' rushing total (232-110) and time of possession (41:21-18:39).

The Bills, on the other hand, had four turnovers, and they all hurt. The most critical came in the fourth quarter after Jim Kelly had rallied Buffalo to within a touchdown. Robb Riddick fumbled the ball at the Bengals' 35 after a hit by nose tackle Tim Krumrie, and cornerback Lewis Billups recovered. Esiason then directed the clinching 65-yard scoring drive.

"You give a team like Cincinnati the ball four extra times, and you never take the steam out of their high-powered offense," said Buffalo head coach Marv Levy.

In Chicago, the Bears stayed two games ahead of the Vikings in the NFC Central Division by shutting out Green Bay 16-0. But it was a costly victory.

Defensive end Richard Dent, the team's leading sacker (10½), broke his left leg and was out for the season. Quarterback Mike Tomczak, who led Chicago to three victories in a row after replacing the injured Jim McMahon, separated his left shoulder and was declared out for the rest of the regular season.

QUOTE

Rams defensive end **Gary Jeter**, discussing his team's four-game losing streak:

"It's a downpour and we have no umbrella."

MARV RUBIN

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

DAMIAN STROHMEYER

Broncos' John Elway

VERNON BIEVER

Giants' Lawrence Taylor

AFC OFFENSE—John Elway, quarterback, Denver
Elway passed for 272 yards and three touchdowns, including 39- and 58-yard bombs to Mark Jackson, and dived a yard for another score as the Broncos stopped the Rams 35-24.

AFC DEFENSE—Duane Bickett, linebacker, Indianapolis
Bickett made 10 tackles, recovered a fumble to set up a touchdown, and had an interception in the Colts' 24-21 victory over the Patriots.

NFC OFFENSE—Jerry Rice, wide receiver, San Francisco
Rice caught six passes for 171 yards, including 96- and 41-yard scoring strikes from Joe Montana, in the 49ers' 48-10 rout of San Diego. The 96-yard pass play was the longest touchdown play from scrimmage in San Francisco history.

NFC DEFENSE—Lawrence Taylor, linebacker, New York Giants
Playing in a harness to protect a torn chest muscle, Taylor sacked Bobby Hebert three times, forced two fumbles, and had 10 total tackles in New York's 13-12 victory over New Orleans. Taylor also pressured Morten Andersen into missing a 29-yard field goal.

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	11	2	0
Indianapolis	7	6	0
New England	7	6	0
N.Y. Jets	6	6	1
Miami	5	8	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	10	3	0
Houston	9	4	0
Cleveland	8	5	0
Pittsburgh	3	10	0
AFC West			
Denver	7	6	0
Seattle	7	6	0
L.A. Raiders	6	7	0
San Diego	4	9	0
Kansas City	3	9	1

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	8	5	0
Philadelphia	8	5	0
Phoenix	7	6	0
Washington	6	7	0
Dallas	2	11	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	11	2	0
Minnesota	9	4	0
Detroit	3	10	0
Tampa Bay	3	10	0
Green Bay	2	11	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	9	4	0
San Francisco	8	5	0
L.A. Rams	7	6	0
Atlanta	5	8	0

SCORES

AFC
Cincinnati 35, Buffalo 21
Indianapolis 24, New England 21
N.Y. Jets 38, Miami 34
Pittsburgh 16, Kansas City 0
Seattle 35, L.A. Raiders 27

NFC
Atlanta 17, Tampa Bay 10
Chicago 16, Green Bay 0
Minnesota 23, Detroit 0
N.Y. Giants 13, New Orleans 12
Philadelphia 31, Phoenix 21

Interconference
Cleveland 17, Washington 13
Denver 35, L.A. Rams 24
Houston 25, Dallas 17
San Francisco 48, San Diego 10

"We've dealt with adversity before," head coach Mike Ditka said. "They're bad injuries, but we aren't going to quit playing."

One guy who didn't quit playing when Tomczak went out was Neal Anderson, who ran 80 yards for a touchdown and finished with 139 yards and two scores.

On Thanksgiving Day in Detroit, the Vikings' NFL-leading defense swallowed up

BRUCE DIERDORFF

Neal Anderson's big day took some of the heat off inexperienced Bears quarterback Jim Harbaugh.

the Lions 23-0. Minnesota, which won its fourth consecutive game, set a team record by allowing only three first downs, and tied another club mark by giving up just 60 yards in total offense.

"We're playing with a lot of confidence now," defensive tackle Keith Millard said. "We don't feel anyone can move the ball on us."

While the Lions didn't cross midfield until the fourth quarter, Minnesota's Chuck Nelson kicked three field goals, Alfred Anderson ran for two touchdowns, and Wade Wilson completed 16 of 21 passes.

There wasn't much defense played at the Meadowlands, where the Jets shrugged off five touchdown passes by Miami's Dan Marino and outscored the Dolphins 38-34. In week 8, Marino threw for 521 yards, but the Jets won 44-30.

Marino's blitz—two touchdown passes each to Fred Banks and Mark Clayton and an 80-yarder to tight end Ferrell Edmunds—gave Miami a 34-24 third-quarter lead.

In the fourth quarter, however, Ken O'Brien came off the bench to fire scoring passes to Mickey Shuler and Wesley Walker, and the Jets rallied to win. Before leaving with a mild concussion, starting quarterback Pat Ryan passed for 341 yards, including touchdown strikes to Walker and Shuler.

In addition, the Jets set an NFL record for first downs (39), and Al Toon caught 14 passes for 181 yards.

In Seattle, the Seahawks pulled into a tie with Denver for first place in the AFC West as Dave Krieg also threw five touchdown passes to lead his team to a wild 35-27 victory over the Raiders.

Seattle running backs Curt Warner and John L. Williams rushed for 130 and 105 yards, respectively, while Krieg's scoring passes went to five different receivers—Steve Largent, Brian Blades, Paul Skansi, Warner, and Louis Clark.

In Denver, the Broncos handed the Rams their fourth loss in a row, 35-24, breaking the game open with 21 consecutive points in the third quarter. John Elway threw two

DAVID DRAPKIN

Wesley Walker opened and closed the scoring in a typically combustible Jets-Dolphins duel.

touchdown passes in 15 seconds during the blitz, and Tony Dorsett, of all people, lobbed a seven-yard scoring pass to fellow running back Sammy Winder.

The Eagles and Giants remained tied for first in the NFC East as Philadelphia stopped Phoenix 31-21 and the Giants nosed out the Saints 13-12. Randall Cunningham threw touchdown passes to Ron Johnson and Cris Carter to help the Eagles to their fourth consecutive victory. When Cunningham left for one play in the third quarter with a pulled muscle in his back, Matt Cavanaugh threw another touchdown pass to Johnson.

In New Orleans, the Giants played without injured quarterback Phil Simms, but Jeff Hostetler threw an 85-yard touchdown pass to Stephen Baker in the first half, and Jeff Rutledge hit Baker with a 33-yard pass in the last minute to set up the winning field goal. Paul McFadden kicked it through from 35 yards out with 21 seconds left. ◆

Run for the Money, Six for the Show

GEORGE GOIKOVICH

Byner needed 5, got more

At the final two-minute warning in Washington, both the Redskins and Browns desperately were trying to stay in the playoff race.

The Redskins led 13-10, and the Browns were facing third-and-five on the Washington 27. What should Cleveland call? Quarterback Bernie Kosar had completed 23 of 36 passes on the rainy afternoon, but he also had been sacked six times.

"We talked about what to [call] during the two-minute warning," Kosar said. "The way I was being pressured all day, we felt we should run. [Head coach] Marty Schottenheimer called the play and we went with a quick count."

Schottenheimer called for a trap, with Earnest Byner carrying the ball. "At first, I didn't think the play was going to go," Byner said later.

But, on only his fifth carry of the day, Byner broke two tackles at the line and outran two other defenders to the end zone. The touchdown came with 1:49 left, and the Browns hung on to win 17-13.

"All I was thinking about when it started was getting a first down," Byner said. "But I just gave it a little bit of extra effort, and, luckily, it came when we needed it."

Byner was ably assisted by Kevin Mack, who returned from a two-game injury layoff to run for 116 yards and a touchdown of his own.

The victory lifted the Browns' record to 8-5 and kept them alive in the fiercely competitive AFC Central Division. The defending Super Bowl-champion Redskins, losing their third in a row, fell to 6-7 in the NFC East and virtually were out of the playoffs.

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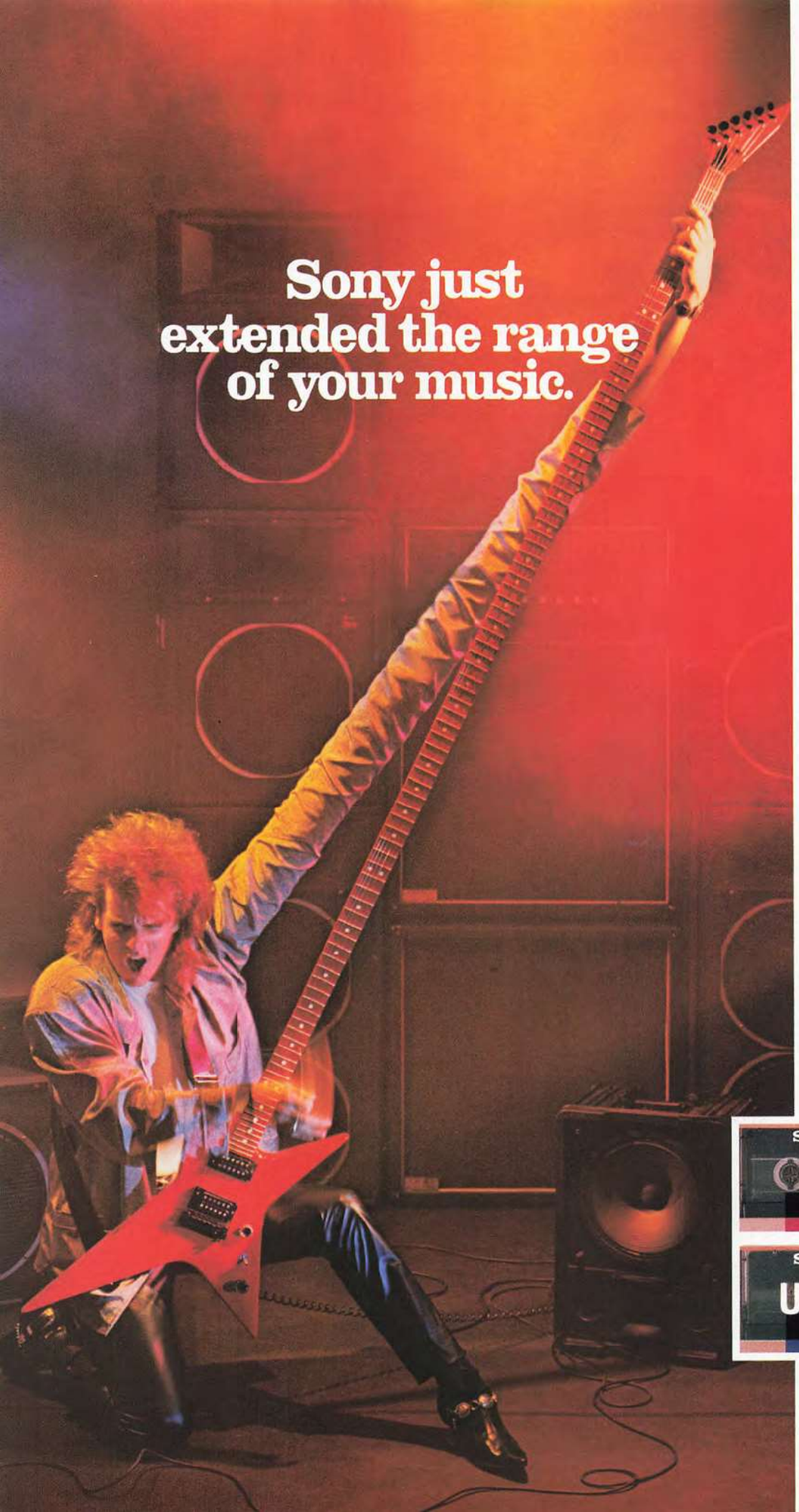

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WEEK 14 DECEMBER 4

VIKINGS PRO BOWL SAFETY Joey Browner shook his head. He was awed by his own guys.

"This is the most dominating team I've ever played with," he said. "It's incredible."

In 1987, the Vikings got hot in the playoffs and reached the NFC title game. This time they were on a roll before the playoffs even started. Playing at home in the Metrodome, they won their fifth in a row, blitzing the NFC West-leading New Orleans Saints 45-3.

Because of the score, it was the most shocking game in a weekend that had two other big surprises—Tampa Bay's 10-5 victory over Buffalo, and Pittsburgh's 37-34 win at Houston. Both the Buccaneers and Steelers came into week 14 with 3-10 records.

But the score that got everyone's attention came out of Minneapolis, where the Vikings took a 38-0 lead while routing a team that had suffered its previous four losses by a *total* of seven points.

"I knew they would be tough, but I never thought they'd do what they did," Saints head coach Jim Mora said. "I really believe that coach [Jerry] Burns held the score down. It could have been worse."

It was bad enough for Mora and the Saints as Bobby Hebert and Dave Wilson were held to 10 completions in 36 attempts, while Vikings cornerback Carl Lee and linebacker Jesse Solomon returned interceptions 58 and 78 yards for touchdowns.

When the game ended, the Vikings had not allowed a touchdown in 17 quarters and had outscored their last four opponents 123-9.

The Minnesota offense wasn't bad either, as Wade Wilson, the NFL's second-leading passer, threw three touchdown passes, including 15- and 68-yard strikes to Hassan Jones.

There was one sour note for the Vikings, however. Nine-year veteran defensive end Doug Martin suffered a knee injury in the game, underwent surgery, and was lost for the season.

In Tampa, AFC East champion Buffalo, which had started the season 11-1, suffered its second consecutive defeat while scoring only a safety and a field goal against Tampa Bay.

For the first time all season, the Buccaneers' Vinny Testaverde, the NFL's most intercepted quarterback, did not have a turnover. Testaverde also ran four yards for the game's only touchdown.

On defense, the Buccaneers stopped the Bills at the Tampa Bay 1 in the third quarter when linebacker Ervin Randle tackled Robb Riddick for no gain on fourth down. And safety Mark Robinson intercepted a pass by Jim Kelly at the Tampa Bay 14 with 42 seconds left.

In Houston, the Oilers had won 10 games in a row in the

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	11	3	0
Indianapolis	8	6	0
New England	8	6	0
N.Y. Jets	6	7	1
Miami	5	9	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	11	3	0
Cleveland	9	5	0
Houston	9	5	0
Pittsburgh	4	10	0
AFC West			
Denver	7	7	0
L.A. Raiders	7	7	0
Seattle	7	7	0
Kansas City	4	9	1
San Diego	4	10	0

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	9	5	0
Philadelphia	8	6	0
Phoenix	7	7	0
Washington	7	7	0
Dallas	2	12	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	11	3	0
Minnesota	10	4	0
Detroit	4	10	0
Tampa Bay	4	10	0
Green Bay	2	12	0
NFC West			
New Orleans	9	5	0
San Francisco	9	5	0
L.A. Rams	8	6	0
Atlanta	5	9	0

SCORES

AFC
Cincinnati 27, San Diego 10
Indianapolis 31, Miami 28
Kansas City 38, N.Y. Jets 34
L.A. Raiders 21, Denver 20
New England 13, Seattle 7
Pittsburgh 37, Houston 34
NFC
Detroit 30, Green Bay 14
L.A. Rams 23, Chicago 3
Minnesota 45, New Orleans 3
N.Y. Giants 44, Phoenix 7
San Francisco 13, Atlanta 3
Washington 20, Philadelphia 19
Interconference
Cleveland 24, Dallas 21
Tampa Bay 10, Buffalo 5

MALCOLM EMMONS

Rookie Lars Tate and Tampa Bay outrushed the Bills 110-39 and held the ball for nearly 35 minutes.

Kansas City Closing Costs

DAVID BOSS

Gansz rolled the dice.

In 1988, being a Chiefs fan was an open invitation to getting an ulcer.

Through the first 14 weeks of the season, seven Kansas City games had been decided by three points or fewer, one had been a tie, and the final margin in four others was a touchdown or less. Twelve games were decided on the final drive.

"When it comes down to the wire like this every week, you're right on the razor's edge," Chiefs head coach Frank Gansz said. "You're completely drained emotionally."

Gansz and the rest of the Chiefs were drained again in week 14, when, for the third time in four weeks, they won in the last minute, rallying to stop the Jets 38-34. It took a courageous call by the coach to do it.

His team was on the Jets' 1-yard line with five seconds left, trailing 34-31 and needing a field goal to force overtime. But Gansz didn't want an overtime.

"We were down there, and I wanted to go for the win," he said later. "I have always told them, when you have an opportunity, seize it, and it will multiply. They deserved to win."

So the Chiefs sent rookie running back James Saxon off right guard behind 253-pound fullback Christian Okoye, and the two crashed into the end zone with two seconds left.

"I rode in on his back," Saxon said.

Okoye hit somebody—or something—hard. He broke his right hand on the play.

The excitement wasn't over, however. On the game's final play, the kickoff to New York, the desperate Jets had nine players handle the ball—three of them twice—as they tried to score with nine laterals and a batted ball. There also were two fumbles.

It all netted two yards. The kickoff was first caught on the Jets' 37, and the ball wound up on the New York 39.

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

PAUL SPINELLI/NFLP

Raiders' Greg Townsend

CORKY TREWIN

Redskins' Ricky Sanders

AFC OFFENSE—Bubby Brister, quarterback, Pittsburgh
Brister passed for 311 yards and three touchdowns, including a 16-yard collaboration with Merril Hoge that won the game with 20 seconds left, as the Steelers surprised Houston 37-34.
AFC DEFENSE—Greg Townsend, end, Los Angeles Raiders
Townsend had five tackles, including two sacks of John Elway, broke up two passes, and returned an interception 86 yards for a touchdown in the Raiders' 21-20 victory over the Broncos.
NFC OFFENSE—Ricky Sanders, wide receiver, Washington
Sanders caught 10 passes for 128 yards and a touchdown as the Redskins upended the Eagles 20-19.
NFC DEFENSE—Carl Lee, cornerback, and Jesse Solomon, linebacker, Minnesota
Lee (58 yards) and Solomon (78) both returned interceptions for touchdowns in the Vikings' 45-3 rout of New Orleans. Solomon, whose return was the longest for a touchdown in the team's history, also had five solo tackles and a sack. Lee had three solo tackles and broke up five passes.

Astrodome, but they couldn't stop Steelers quarterback Bubby Brister, falling two games behind Cincinnati in the AFC Central with a 37-34 loss to Pittsburgh. Brister passed for 311 yards and three touchdowns, including the winning score with 20 seconds left.

"I think you saw a future NFL star in Bubby Brister," Oilers head coach Jerry Glanville said.

Houston went ahead 34-31 with 1:30 left on quarterback Warren Moon's three-yard touchdown run. But Brister, who already had thrown 80- and 65-yard touchdown bombs to Louis Lipps, marched the Steelers 80 yards in 70 seconds and won the game with a 16-yard scoring pass to running back Merril Hoge.

The wild game also featured two kickoff returns for touchdowns—a 92-yard effort by Dwight Stone of Pittsburgh and a 90-yard run by rookie Lorenzo White of Houston.

While Houston lost, Cincinnati (11-3) became the third team to clinch a playoff spot with a 27-10 victory over San Diego. Rookie Ickey Woods ran for 141 yards and two touchdowns, giving him 15 scores for the year, while Boomer Esiason threw two touchdown passes.

The Giants took sole possession of first place in the NFC East with a 44-7 rout of Phoenix at the Meadowlands, while the Eagles lost a heartbreaker to Washington 20-19.

The Giants held the Cardinals to 158 total yards and forced five turnovers, with three of those turnovers and a bad punt snap setting up 24 points by New York. The Giants' Phil Simms threw two first-half touchdown passes to Stacy Robinson, Joe Morris ran for 122 yards and a score, and ex-Cardinal Ottis Anderson scored three times on one-yard runs.

PAUL SPINELLI/NFLP

The Rams constantly pressured Jim Harbaugh, limiting the young Bears quarterback to 108 passing yards.

To celebrate the victory, linebacker Harry Carson doused head coach Bill Parcells with Gatorade, as he did in 1986 when the Giants won Super Bowl XXI.

"He [Parcells] begged us not to," Carson said, "but it was warranted. Everybody wanted to see it."

The Eagles, who had won four games in a row, led the Redskins 19-7 midway through the third quarter, when Washington replaced starting quarterback Mark Rypien with Doug Williams.

Williams, who completed 20 of 32 passes, drove the Redskins to a touchdown and two field goals, including rookie Chip Lohmiller's winning 44-yard kick with one second left. The ball went through a tricky wind and barely cleared the crossbar.

In Anaheim, the Rams, who were 0-4 in November, did a flip-flop in December and smacked the Bears 23-3. That snapped Chicago's four-game winning streak and cut the Bears' NFC Central lead to one game over the Vikings.

With Jim McMahon and Mike Tomczak both out with injuries, the Bears had to go with third-string quarterback Jim Harbaugh, who completed only 11 of 30 passes.

On the other hand, the Rams' Jim Everett threw a 31-yard touchdown pass to Henry Ellard, while Greg Bell ran for 98 yards and another score. Everett finished the game with a club-record 3,460 yards passing for the season.

The 49ers moved into a tie with the Saints for first in the NFC West by holding the Falcons to eight first downs and winning their third in a row, 13-3. Roger Craig ran for 103 yards and raised his season total to 1,336, another club record. ♦

QUOTE

MARY RUBIN

Patriots head coach **Raymond Berry**, celebrating after his team held Seattle to two first downs and 65 total yards in a 13-7 victory:

"I told the defense I wanted to kiss every one of them."

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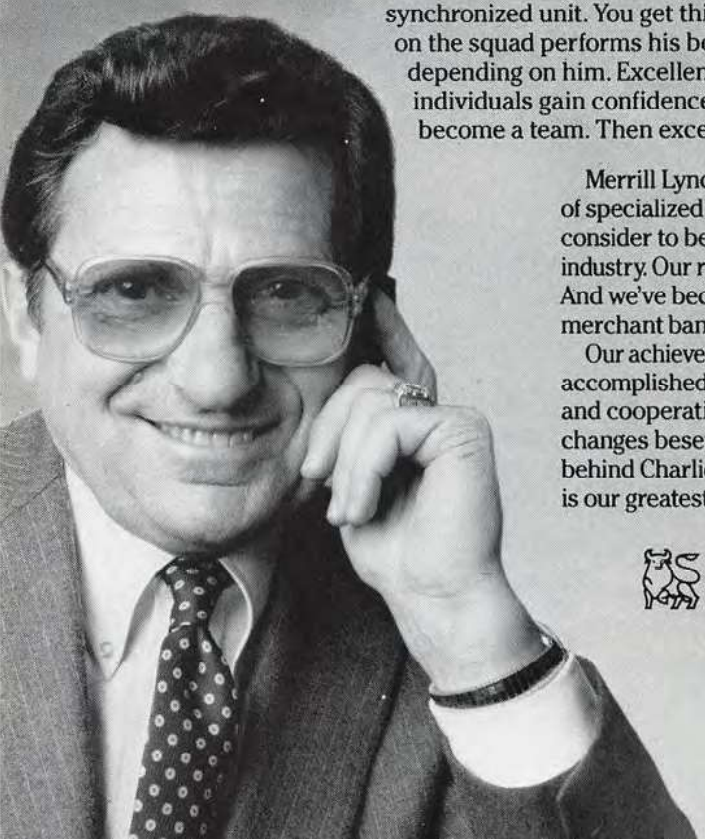

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WEEK 15 DECEMBER 10

THERE HASN'T BEEN A dynasty in the NFL since the Pittsburgh Steelers of the late 1970s—but the two most consistent teams in recent years have been the Bears and 49ers.

In Chicago, where the wind-chill factor dipped below zero, the Bears clinched their fifth successive NFC Central title on Kevin Butler's 32-yard field goal with four seconds left, beating Detroit 13-12.

And, in San Francisco, where the temperature was a more balmy 68 degrees, the 49ers rolled past the Saints 30-17, clinching at least a wild-card berth and making the playoffs for an NFL-leading sixth straight year.

With a week to go in the regular season, four teams—Buffalo, Cincinnati, Chicago, and San Francisco—were in the playoffs and 11 teams still were fighting for the remaining six spots.

Definitely out of contention were both of last year's Super Bowl teams, NFL champion Washington and back-to-back representative Denver. The Redskins were bounced by Dallas, and Denver was given the boot by Seattle. It marked the first time that both Super Bowl teams failed to make the playoffs the next season.

In Chicago, the Bears again played without quarterbacks Jim McMahon and Mike Tomczak, but Jim Harbaugh completed 18 of 26 passes, ran for a touchdown, and drove his team 55 yards in the last five-and-a-half minutes to position Butler for the winning kick.

"Kevin Butler has won so many games in the last second for us that we call him our 'money man,'" said wide receiver Dennis McKinnon, who caught a 17-yard pass to set up the field goal.

BRUCE DIERDORFF

Neal Anderson found the footing treacherous, but Chicago survived a scare from the Lions 13-12.

The Lions had taken a 12-10 lead with 5:48 left, when Garry James climaxed an 80-yard march by diving a yard for a touchdown. But defensive end Al Harris made a crucial block of Eddie Murray's extra-point attempt.

The Bears were helped to their fifth championship under head coach Mike Ditka by second-place Minnesota. The Vikings had won five consecutive games, but were shocked 18-6 by the Packers, owners of a seven-game losing streak. In a year of upsets, this was perhaps the biggest of all.

"After struggling in the middle of the season, we got ourselves in the position we wanted to be in—within one game of the Bears—and then we gave it back today," Vikings quarterback Wade Wilson said.

Wilson and the Vikings were disgusted because, had they won, they could have taken the division championship themselves by beating the Bears in Minneapolis on the final Monday night of the season.

Playing on a frozen field, the Packers beat the Vikings with two quarterbacks, Randy Wright and Don Majkowski. Wright led first-half touchdown and field-goal drives for a 10-3 lead. When he had to come out with a strained hamstring, Majkow-

There's a Lot to Cheer About in Buffalo

ROBERT L. SMITH

Buffalo fans set an NFL attendance record.

On the sidelines, snow was piled two feet deep. And in the stands, a fan's banner, which flapped in the wind, read: "It's cold out, but it's sold out."

The sign was right on both counts. It *was* cold—11 degrees, with a minus-14-degree wind-chill factor. But, despite the conditions, Buffalo's Rich Stadium was sold out for the eighth straight time—and there were only 2,869 no shows. A crowd of 77,348 had braved the weather to cheer the Bills to a 37-21 victory over the Raiders and set an NFL single-season attendance record.

Buffalo drew 622,793 fans this year, breaking the record set by Detroit in 1980 by 200 people. The fans obviously helped. The Bills went 8-0 at home, and with the AFC's best overall record (12-3), Buffalo could clinch the home-field advantage throughout the playoffs with either a victory or a Cincinnati loss in week 16.

That advantage wasn't lost on Bills rookie running back Thurman Thomas. "Seems like I always have my best games in this kind of weather," Thomas said. "But I don't think the Raiders were really pumped up to come here."

Thomas rushed for 106 yards on just 14 carries, including a 37-yard touchdown run, as the Bills gained 255 on the ground.

While the Bills played turnover-free football in the biting cold, the Raiders lost three fumbles, two of them setting up 10 Buffalo points and one of them killing a drive. "I didn't think they would be jumping for joy to play in this weather," Bills nose tackle Fred Smerlas said.

QUOTE

Cowboys coach **Tom Landry**, describing the mood in his locker room after Dallas snapped a 10-game losing streak with a 24-17 victory at Washington:
"Everyone was looking for the champagne."

MARV RUBIN

ski played the second half and threw a touchdown pass to Patrick Scott.

On defense, linebacker Tim Harris sacked Wilson twice and also tackled him in the end zone for a safety.

In San Francisco, the 49ers took the NFC West lead and won their fourth game in a row with a 13-point defeat of the fading Saints. "We played our best game of the season," head coach Bill Walsh said.

The Saints led 3-0 in the second quarter, but the 49ers scored three quick touchdowns, took a 21-10 halftime lead, and stayed in control with three field goals by Mike Cofer in the second half. Roger Craig ran for 115 yards and a touchdown.

In Washington, where the Redskins were eliminated from playoff contention by Dallas 24-17, Cowboys quarterback Steve Pelluer passed for 333 yards and teamed up with rookie wide receiver Michael Irvin on three touchdown passes. The victory was the Cowboys' first in 11 games, and they were helped by five Redskins turnovers.

"We can't overcome ourselves," Redskins head coach Joe Gibbs said. "We're the enemy."

Denver was kicked out of playoff contention a little more emphatically—Seattle scored touchdowns on its first six possessions and routed the Broncos 42-14.

Curt Warner ran for 126 yards and four touchdowns on runs of 1, 1, 13, and 12 yards to tie the team single-game scoring record, and John L. Williams ran for 109 yards and caught a touchdown pass from Dave Krieg. Krieg completed 19 of 22 passes.

At the Meadowlands, the Giants moved to within a win of clinching the NFC Eastern Division crown with a 28-12 victory over Kansas City. The Giants' running game continued to improve, with Joe Morris dashing for 140 yards, while Phil Simms added balance with two touchdown passes to tight end Mark Bavaro.

The Eagles continued their fast finish with a 23-17 victory at Phoenix that gave them five wins in six weeks. Quarterback Randall Cunningham ran for one touchdown and passed for another, and defensive ends Reggie White and Clyde Simmons set up touchdowns with fumble recoveries.

Cincinnati was a win away from clinching the AFC Central title, but the Bengals didn't come close to getting it in their game at Houston. The Oilers kept their own playoff hopes alive with a stunning 41-6 victory.

Mike Rozier ran for 126 yards and three touchdowns, Warren Moon passed for two scores, and the Oilers' defense held Cincinnati, the NFL's leading offensive team, to just 226 yards and two field goals.

In Foxboro, the Patriots won their first overtime game ever—after 10 successive losses—on Jason Staurovsky's 27-yard field goal, which turned back Tampa Bay 10-7. It was playoff hopeful New England's sixth win in seven weeks. ◆

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

ALAN SCHWARTZ

Dolphins' Dan Marino

DAN HONDA

49ers' Eric Wright

AFC OFFENSE—Dan Marino, quarterback, Miami
Marino passed for 404 yards and four touchdowns, including two to Mark Clayton, as Miami outscored Cleveland 38-31. He also threw a 46-yard bomb to Fred Banks that set up Lorenzo Hampton's game-winning one-yard touchdown run with 34 seconds left, and went over 4,000 passing yards for an NFL-record fourth time.
AFC DEFENSE—Gill Byrd, cornerback, San Diego
Byrd stopped two Steelers' drives with interceptions, made two tackles, and broke up a pass as the Chargers beat Pittsburgh 20-14.
NFC OFFENSE—Michael Irvin, wide receiver, Dallas
Irvin caught three touchdown passes from Steve Pelluer (24, 61, and 12 yards) in the Cowboys' 24-17 victory over Washington. In all, he had six catches for 149 yards.
NFC DEFENSE—Eric Wright, cornerback, San Francisco
Wright made six tackles, intercepted a pass, and forced a fumble and then recovered it as the 49ers ripped New Orleans 30-17. His recovery set up a field goal.

PAUL SPINELLI/NFLP

Mike Lansford kicked three field goals and an extra point to become the Rams' all-time scoring leader.

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	12	3	0
New England	9	6	0
Indianapolis	8	7	0
N.Y. Jets	7	7	1
Miami	6	9	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	11	4	0
Houston	10	5	0
Cleveland	9	6	0
Pittsburgh	4	11	0
AFC West			
Seattle	8	7	0
Denver	7	8	0
L.A. Raiders	7	8	0
San Diego	5	10	0
Kansas City	4	10	1

NFC East	W	L	T
N.Y. Giants	10	5	0
Philadelphia	9	6	0
Phoenix	7	8	0
Washington	7	8	0
Dallas	3	12	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	12	3	0
Minnesota	10	5	0
Detroit	4	11	0
Tampa Bay	4	11	0
Green Bay	3	12	0
NFC West			
San Francisco	10	5	0
L.A. Rams	9	6	0
New Orleans	9	6	0
Atlanta	5	10	0

SCORES

AFC
Buffalo 37, L.A. Raiders 21
Houston 41, Cincinnati 6
Miami 38, Cleveland 31
N.Y. Jets 34, Indianapolis 16
San Diego 20, Pittsburgh 14
Seattle 42, Denver 14
NFC
Chicago 13, Detroit 12
Dallas 24, Washington 17
Green Bay 18, Minnesota 6
L.A. Rams 22, Atlanta 7
Philadelphia 23, Phoenix 17
San Francisco 30, New Orleans 17
Interconference
New England 10, Tampa Bay 7 (OT)
N.Y. Giants 28, Kansas City 12

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3. Send your entry by July 28, 1989 to: Fisher Salutes America's Nuttiest Sports Nuts, P.O. Box 1029, Tinley Park, IL 60477. A complete list of winners may be obtained after November 1, 1989 by writing to the above address.
4. Each entry must be submitted separately. No duplicate entries will be awarded. Earliest postmark will determine the winning entry in the event more than one person nominates a finalist.
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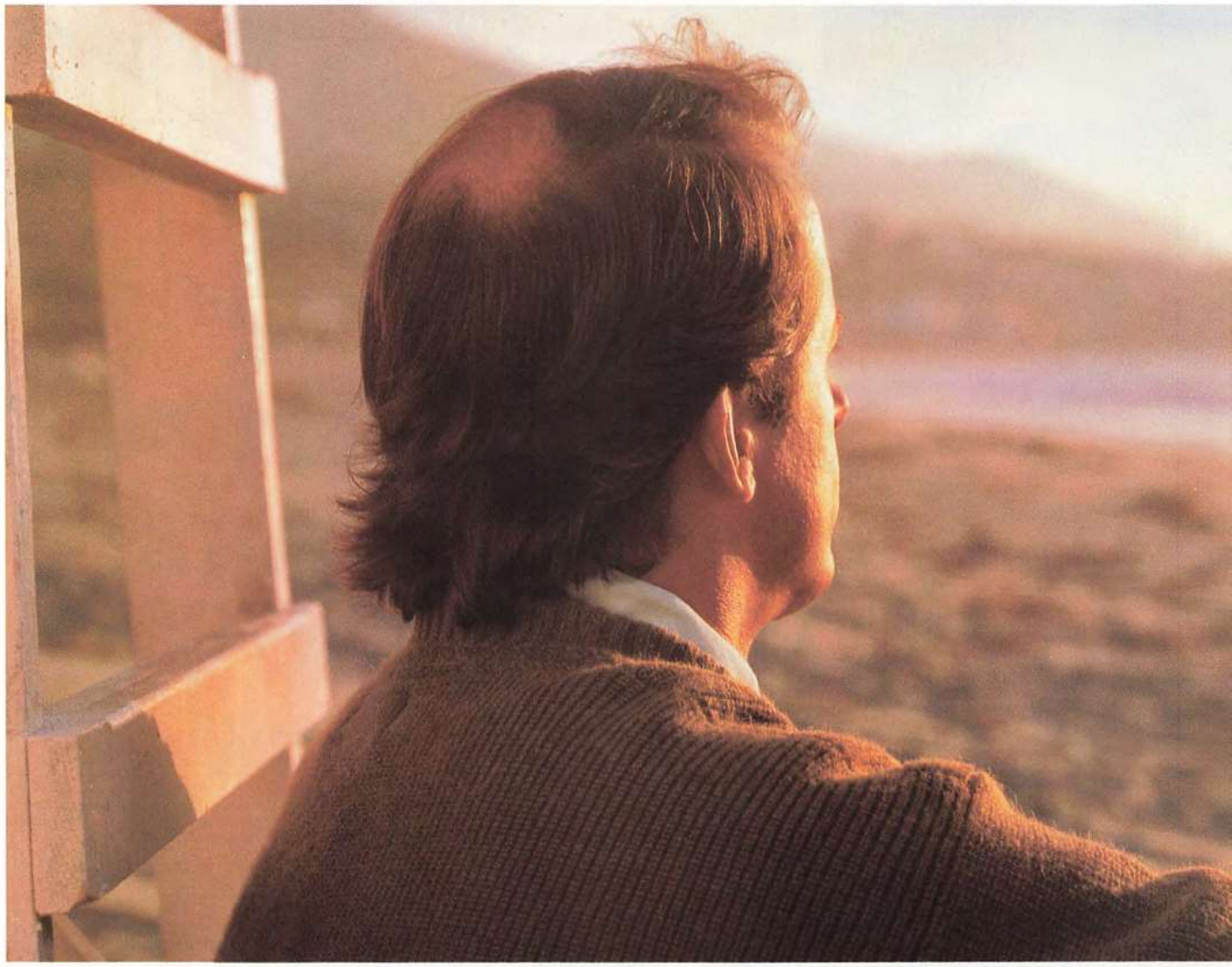

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WEEK 16 DECEMBER 17

CLEVELAND WAS ON THE way to a white Christmas—and an unhappy one.

Midway through the third quarter, while heavy snow fell in Cleveland Stadium, the city's beloved Browns trailed the Houston Oilers 23-7 and were on their way out of the playoffs.

For the second time this season, quarterback Bernie Kosar was benched with an injury, and Don Strock, the 38-year-old backup who had come to the Browns from Miami early in the season, had thrown three interceptions in the first quarter. Houston safety Domingo Bryant returned one of them 36 yards for a touchdown.

But Strock suddenly got hot. He directed 63-, 78-, and 89-yard touchdown drives, and the Browns came storming back to win 28-23. He threw a two-yard scoring pass to Earnest Byner, and Byner ran two yards for another touchdown. Then, with 6:23 left, Strock drilled a 22-yard pass to Webster Slaughter that won the game. Strock passed for 326 yards.

RON VESELY

Don Strock was all heart.

"He was wonderful," Browns wide receiver Reggie Langhorne said.

The improbable comeback set up an AFC Wild Card Game—and rematch—between Cleveland and Houston on Christmas Eve in the same stadium. If Houston had won, the Oilers would have stayed home to play the Colts.

Oilers head coach Jerry Glanville tried to smile. "Better to lose this one than the next one," he said.

There were winners and losers all over the NFL on the last weekend as the final six teams made the playoffs.

In Los Angeles, the Seahawks and Raiders squared off for the AFC West title, and Seattle won its first divisional championship ever, outscoring Los Angeles 43-37. Dave Krieg passed for 410 yards and four touchdowns, two of them to rookie Brian Blades, and Norm Johnson equaled his own team record by kicking five field goals. Krieg was ably assisted this time by running back John L. Williams, who rushed for 59 yards and caught seven passes for 180 more, including a 75-yard screen for a touchdown.

QUOTE

MARV RUBIN

Tight end **Ozzie Newsome**, marveling at backup quarterback Don Strock, who led the Browns to a wild-card clinching victory over Houston:

"A guy who spent the first four or five weeks on the golf course won it for us."

It wasn't a total loss for the Raiders as Jay Schroeder, looking like their quarterback of the future, passed for 354 yards and three touchdowns.

In San Francisco, the Los Angeles Rams won an NFC wild-card berth and got a little revenge with a 38-16 rout of the 49ers, who had blasted them 48-0 in the last game of 1987. The 49ers came up flat this time. They found out earlier in the day they had

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

DAVID BOSS

Seahawks' Dave Krieg

RICHARD GENTILE

Eagles' Reggie White

AFC OFFENSE—Dave Krieg, quarterback, Seattle
Krieg passed for 410 yards and four touchdowns to lead the Seahawks to a wild 43-37 victory over the Raiders that clinched the AFC Western Division championship.

AFC DEFENSE—Marty Lyons, end, New York Jets
Lyons had eight tackles, including two of his team's eight sacks of Phil Simms, and broke up a pass as the Jets knocked the Giants out of the playoffs with a 27-21 come-from-behind victory.

NFC OFFENSE—Jim Everett, quarterback, Los Angeles Rams
Everett threw four touchdown passes and finished the season with a team-record 31 as he led the Rams to a 38-16 victory over the 49ers that clinched a wild-card playoff berth.

NFC DEFENSE—Reggie White, end, Philadelphia
White had a career-high 14 tackles, including two sacks of Steve Pelluer, as the Eagles stopped Dallas 23-7 and won the NFC East title. White finished with an NFL-leading 18 sacks.

STANDINGS

AFC East	W	L	T
Buffalo	12	4	0
Indianapolis	9	7	0
New England	9	7	0
N.Y. Jets	8	7	1
Miami	6	10	0
AFC Central			
Cincinnati	12	4	0
Cleveland	10	6	0
Houston	10	6	0
Pittsburgh	5	11	0
AFC West			
Seattle	9	7	0
Denver	8	8	0
L.A. Raiders	7	9	0
San Diego	6	10	0
Kansas City	4	11	1

NFC East	W	L	T
Philadelphia	10	6	0
N.Y. Giants	10	6	0
Phoenix	7	9	0
Washington	7	9	0
Dallas	3	13	0
NFC Central			
Chicago	12	4	0
Minnesota	11	5	0
Tampa Bay	5	11	0
Detroit	4	12	0
Green Bay	4	12	0
NFC West			
San Francisco	10	6	0
L.A. Rams	10	6	0
New Orleans	10	6	0
Atlanta	5	11	0

AFC
Cleveland 28, Houston 23
Denver 21, New England 10
Indianapolis 17, Buffalo 14
Pittsburgh 40, Miami 24
San Diego 24, Kansas City 13
Seattle 43, L.A. Raiders 37

NFC
Green Bay 26, Phoenix 17
L.A. Rams 38, San Francisco 16
Minnesota 28, Chicago 27
New Orleans 10, Atlanta 9
Philadelphia 23, Dallas 7
Tampa Bay 21, Detroit 10

Interconference
Cincinnati 20, Washington 17
N.Y. Jets 27, N.Y. Giants 21

DAVID DRAPKIN

Freeman McNeil's six-yard touchdown run gave the Jets a 20-7 lead over the Giants early in the third quarter.

clinched the NFC West title.

"I've seen them play with more emotion," Rams quarterback Jim Everett said. "But I'm not going to take anything away from our victory. We came out ready to play good football."

Everett certainly did. He threw four touchdown passes —three to tight end Damone Johnson—while Henry Ellard had six receptions (one for a score) and finished with a club-record 86 catches for the season.

The Rams' defense was inspired, too. Linebacker Kevin Greene sacked Joe Montana four times in the first quarter and finished with 4½ on a Sunday night when the Rams sacked Montana and Steve Young a total of nine times.

The Rams had a chance to win the wild-card berth only because the Jets, a team out of the playoff picture, rallied to stun the Giants 27-21 at the Meadowlands. The loss cost the Giants the NFC East title (won by the Eagles), and then they lost the wild-card spot when the Rams won.

The Giants and Jets waged a memorable game. The Jets took a 20-7 lead in the third quarter, but Phil Simms, throwing on the run and scrambling for good gains to elude a fierce Jets rush, threw touchdown passes to Stephen Baker and Lionel Manuel to give his team a 21-20 lead with 4:54 left.

"When we took the lead, I thought we had won the game," Simms said.

But Bobby Humphery returned the next kickoff 37 yards to the Jets' 48, and they drove 52 yards to win on Ken O'Brien's five-yard pass to Al Toon with 37 seconds left.

In Dallas, the Eagles won their first division championship since 1980 with a 23-7 victory over the Cowboys. The Eagles and Giants both finished at 10-6, but Philadelphia won the NFC East because it had swept the season series with New York.

The Bengals already were in postseason play, but they clinched the AFC Central title—and the home-field advantage throughout the playoffs—with a little bit of luck. They were tied 17-17 with the Redskins when Washington rookie Chip Lohmiller lined up to try a 29-yard field goal with five seconds left. His kick hit the right upright.

"It's called Divine Providence," Cincinnati kicker Jim Breech said. "That's what it was."

Breech didn't miss when he was given *his* chance in overtime, making a 20-yard field goal to give the Bengals a 20-17 victory. There were two noteworthy performances by running backs. Washington rookie Jamie Morris carried an NFL-record 45 times for 152 yards. And Bengals rookie Ickey Woods ran for 115 yards and improved his total to 1,066 yards for the season.

RON VESELY

Boomer Esiason played it cool, passing for 187 yards and two touchdowns while avoiding interceptions.

In Minneapolis, the Vikings had clinched a wild-card spot by kickoff time, but they won the right to play host to the Rams by holding off the Bears 28-27.

Minnesota took a 21-0 second-quarter lead, but the Bears retaliated. Mike Tomczak's 76-yard touchdown pass to Dennis McKinnon, Neal Anderson's 51-yard scoring run, and two field goals by Kevin Butler cut the score to 21-20 in the fourth quarter.

With less than three minutes left, the Bears were on the Vikings' 8. But Tomczak's pass over the middle was intercepted by linebacker Walker Lee Ashley, and he ran 94 yards to score what proved to be the clinching touchdown.

No one was going to the playoffs in San Diego, but the Chargers' Gary Anderson ran for a club-record 217 yards as San Diego stopped Kansas City 24-13. The Chargers finished with four victories in their last six games, but head coach Al Saunders was dismissed on Monday. ♦

Slow Start, Fast Finish

DON LARSEN

The Colts ran out of time.

No team had great momentum going into the playoffs this year. But one NFL team finished with eight victories in the last 10 weeks. Unfortunately, that one watched the playoffs on TV.

The Indianapolis Colts, 1987 AFC East champions, made the tactical error of starting the season 1-5, and, despite their late rush, they just missed making the Super Bowl playoffs.

"It's a disappointment because we should have been there," quarterback Gary Hogeboom said.

Hogeboom replaced injured starter Chris Chandler in the third quarter of the final game and led two late touchdown drives that rallied Indianapolis past AFC East champion Buffalo 17-14. He threw two scoring passes, including one of seven yards to running back Albert Bentley that won the game with 1:18 left.

The Colts came to their locker room with a chance to advance to postseason play if Houston could hang on to defeat Cleveland. But the Browns rallied to win and replaced the Colts in the playoffs.

"We did so much to put ourselves in this position where we were waiting to hear from Cleveland," Colts head coach Ron Meyer said. "But we put ourselves behind the eight ball going 1-5 at the start."

In their last-minute bid for postseason honors, the Colts controlled the ball for nearly 39 minutes against the Bills as Eric Dickerson ran for 166 yards. He finished with 1,659 for the season to lead the NFL in rushing for the fourth time in six years.

As he looks ahead to his seventh NFL season in 1989, Dickerson already has rushed for 9,915 yards and stands seventh on the all-time list. But he might trade a few of those yards to be back in the playoffs.

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WEEK 17 DECEMBER 24, 26

RAMS HEAD COACH JOHN Robinson is a man who appreciates excellence.

"Joey Browner," Robinson said, "is the best defensive player in this league." Unfortunately for the Rams, Browner plays for the Minnesota Vikings. And his two first-quarter interceptions both led to touchdowns and a fast 14-0 lead as Minnesota dominated the Rams 28-17 in the NFC Wild Card Game the day after Christmas.

As they headed for San Francisco to meet the 49ers in an NFC Divisional Playoff Game, the Vikings had won seven of their last eight games and were the hottest team in the NFL playoffs. Two days earlier, on Christmas Eve, Houston outfought Cleveland 24-23 on the road to win the AFC Wild Card Game just six days after the Browns had won the season-ending game between the same two teams. The Oilers headed to Buffalo for their third successive road game in a cold-weather city.

"I think maybe they can quit writing that we can't win on the road, we can't win in bad weather, we can't win in Cleveland," Oilers head coach Jerry Glanville said.

RICK KOLODZIEJ

The Vikings' Joey Browner made two interceptions.

GEORGE GOJKOVICH

Allen Pinkett (20) picked up the Oilers' running game.

Vikings 28, Rams 17

Outside the Metrodome, it was windy and snowing in Minneapolis, and the temperature was 20 degrees. Inside, it was 69 degrees. The Vikings enjoyed the game as much as the conditions.

Minnesota's first two touchdowns, which followed Browner's interceptions, came 21 seconds apart. First, the Pro Bowl safety killed the Rams' game-opening drive by grabbing a Jim Everett pass at Minnesota's 1 and returning it to the 27. The Vikings then moved 73 yards for a 7-0 lead, with Alfred Anderson charging into the end zone from the 7. After the kickoff, Everett threw over the middle on first down, but Browner intercepted again and returned the ball to the Rams' 17. On first down, Allen Rice went the distance—breaking tackles along the way—for the second touchdown.

The Rams trimmed the lead to 14-7 before halftime on Everett's three-yard touchdown pass to tight end Damone Johnson, but Minnesota took command again in the third quarter on a beautifully executed 84-yard drive, which ended with Anderson scoring from the 1 for a 21-7 lead.

"I think that was the most important drive," Vikings quarterback Wade Wilson said. "It helped us re-establish ourselves."

Wilson was on target all day, completing 17 of 28 passes (no interceptions) for 253 yards and a touchdown. Anthony Carter caught four of his throws for 102 yards, including a 46-yard effort that set up the Vikings' fourth touchdown.

Minnesota's NFL-leading defense stifled the Rams' passing game most of the afternoon. Everett completed only 19 of 45 passes, and cornerback Carl Lee held Henry Ellard, who caught a Rams-record and NFC-leading 86 passes during the season, without a catch until six minutes were left.

Oilers 24, Browns 23

In Cleveland, they were singing "Rock Around the Strock" for 38-year-old backup quarterback Don Strock, who led the Browns to a 28-23 victory over the Oilers six days earlier to put Cleveland in the playoffs.

But, in the rematch, Strock became the fifth Browns' starting quarterback of 1988 (including Bernie Kosar twice) to go down with an injury. Strock strained the wrist on his passing hand while fumbling a snap at Cleveland's 16 on the Browns' first play of the second quarter.

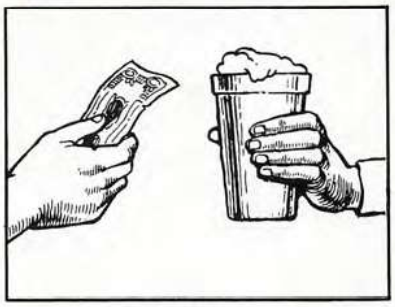
The Oilers turned the fumble into Allen Pinkett's second touchdown, a 16-yard sweep, for a 14-3 lead. Pinkett also scored on a 14-yard pass from Warren Moon and led all rushers with 82 yards on 14 carries.

The Oilers stayed ahead, despite three field goals by Matt Bahr, until late in the third quarter, when Mike Pagel drilled a 14-yard touchdown pass to Webster Slaughter to put the Browns on top 16-14. The touchdown was set up by cornerback Mark Harper's interception.

In relieving Strock, Pagel, who last played in week 6 when *he* got hurt, completed 17 of 25 for two touchdowns.

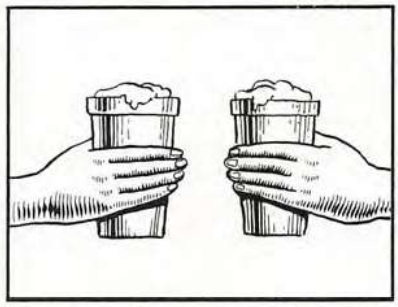
Houston responded to Pagel's first scoring pass by driving 76 yards to retake the lead early in the fourth quarter on rookie Lorenzo White's one-yard touchdown run. Then Tony Zendejas kicked a 49-yard field goal with 1:54 left for a 24-16 lead. The game's final 30 seconds seemed to last about half a day. With Cleveland having closed to 24-23 on Pagel's second scoring pass to Slaughter, the Browns tried three successive onside kicks—the first two were ruled illegal—before the Oilers took possession on the third when the Browns touched the ball before it had gone 10 yards. ◆

BUD LIGHT'S GUIDE TO FOOTBALL



HAND OFF

ROUGHING THE PASSER



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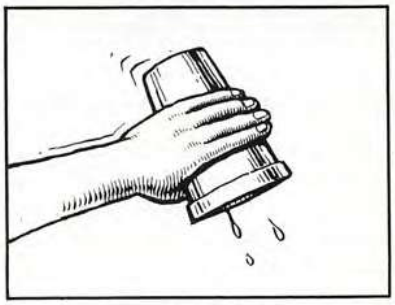
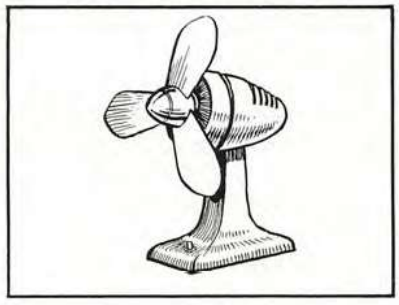


FIRST DOWN

ELIGIBLE RECEIVER



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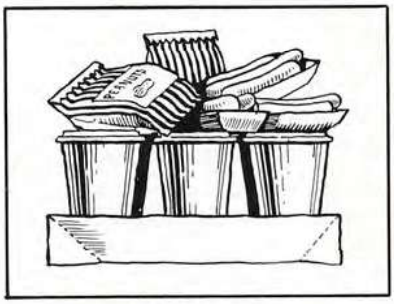

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WEEK 18 DECEMBER 31, JANUARY 1

It was more like a Gothic novel than a football game... with characters drifting in and out of the fog.

On a day in which almost no one saw the second half, the Bears advanced to the NFC Championship Game with a 20-12 victory over the Eagles in fog-shrouded Soldier Field in one of the strangest NFL playoff games ever.

"It was like it was thirty years ago and we were sitting around listening on radio," Bears linebacker Dante Jones said, describing the scene from a sideline perspective. "They ran a play and no one cheered. It was like there was no crowd. Then the [public address] announcer said what had happened and everyone yelled. Weird. Very weird."

After surviving the fog, the Bears prepared to play the 49ers, who gained a large measure of revenge with a 34-9 rout of Minnesota. A year earlier, the Vikings kicked the 49ers out of the playoffs with a 36-24 surprise. The win was San Francisco's first in a playoff game since Super Bowl XIX.

"It's a great feeling to win this game," 49ers head coach Bill Walsh said. "It means a lot to all of us."

AL MESSERSCHMIDT

Maurice Douglass's fourth-quarter interception at the Chicago 17-yard line stole the Eagles' last hope.

Meanwhile, in the AFC, Cincinnati and Buffalo, the two AFC teams with the best records (both 13-4) made it to the championship game. "It's the matchup that should be taking place," Bengals quarterback Boomer Esiason said.

The Bengals jumped to a 21-0 halftime lead on Seattle, then held on to win 21-13. Buffalo's fierce defense and special teams were the keys as the Bills eliminated the Oilers 17-10.

When the dust—and fog—had cleared, home teams had won all four divisional playoff games.

JAMES BIEVER

Randall Cunningham had more than the fog to contend with—Chicago was in his face much of the day.

Bears 20, Eagles 12

The game began under bright blue skies with temperatures in the 30s, but late in the second quarter fog blew in off Lake Michigan—and the fog got worse in the third quarter. For a while, NFL officials considered suspending the game.

Writers, broadcasters, and coaches in the press box, fans in the stands, and even, part of the time, players standing on the sidelines, could not see the action.

"It took the deep pass out of the game," Chicago wide receiver Dennis McKinnon said.

"The fog really affected what we wanted to do," Eagles quarterback Randall Cunningham said. "If you took your ten-yard dropback, you could only see about fifteen yards [downfield]."

But, said Eagles wide receiver Mike Quick, shrugging off the fog, "We just beat ourselves."

Quick was right. Cunningham passed for 407 yards, and Philadelphia moved inside the Bears' 26-yard line *10* times—helped by four Chicago turnovers—and yet the Eagles scored only four field goals by Luis Zendejas.

The Eagles not only stopped themselves with a month's worth of mistakes, they also were turned back several times by the Bears' defense, including interceptions by linebacker Mickey Pruitt and defensive backs Vestee Jackson and Maurice Douglass, which broke up drives.

Among Philadelphia's frustrating moments—on three successive series—were back-to-back touchdown passes by Cunningham that both were nullified by penalties on running back Anthony Toney, Cunningham's failure by an inch to make a first down at the Bears' 4 on a fourth-and-one play, and tight end Keith Jackson's dropped pass in the end zone.

The Bears never trailed after scoring first on Mike Tomczak's 64-yard touchdown pass to McKinnon. Thomas Sanders ran for 94 yards on eight carries and set up one of Kevin Butler's two field goals with a 58-yard run, while Neal Anderson scored on a four-yard run.

GREG TROTT

Roger Craig rolled on.

GREG TROTT

The biggest difference between 1987 and 1988 was the 49ers' ability to shut down Anthony Carter.

49ers 34, Vikings 9

In three consecutive 49ers playoff losses, Joe Montana had not thrown a touchdown pass, Jerry Rice had not caught a touchdown pass, and Roger Craig had not run for a touchdown. So...

Montana drilled three scoring passes, all to Rice in the first half (for 2, 4, and 11 yards), and Craig ran for 135 yards and two more touchdowns, one of them coming on an 80-yard run.

"As a team, I think we had something to prove," Rice said.

"Our offensive line had a great day," Montana said.

The Vikings' line did not. The 49ers sacked Minnesota quarterback Wade Wilson six times, five in the first half, and, under pressure, Wilson threw two interceptions to safety Ronnie Lott. End Larry Roberts had 2½ of the sacks.

Anthony Carter of the Vikings, who caught 10 passes for a playoff-record 227 yards against San Francisco a year before, caught only three for 45 yards.

Bengals 21, Seahawks 13

The Bengals led the NFL in total offense and scoring, and they began this game as if they might get 50 points, scoring touchdowns on three of their first five possessions.

They marched 85, 75, and 56 yards as Stanley Wilson scored twice from the 3, and rookie Ickey Woods scored from the 1 for a 21-0 halftime lead. Woods ran for 126 yards in the game, while Wilson ran for 45 yards on seven carries, and James Brooks added 72 on 13 carries. In all, the Bengals rushed for 254 yards.

"I felt that we could run on them," Woods said. "I pretty much think we can run on everybody."

But Cincinnati went scoreless in the second half, and Seattle got hot. Dave Krieg, who passed for 297 yards for the day, threw a seven-yard touchdown pass to John L. Williams early in the fourth quarter, then ran a yard himself for another touchdown. With 6:05 left, Krieg and the Seahawks had trimmed the score to 21-13, soon to be 21-14. But Norm Johnson, who had been 40-for-40 on extra points in 1988, missed his forty-first, and the Seahawks found an eight-point deficit too much to overcome.

The Bengals held Williams and Curt Warner of Seattle to just 17 yards on 16 carries.

GEORGE GOJKOVICH

Ickey Woods powered the Bengals with 126 yards.

AL MESSERSCHMIDT

Thurman Thomas keyed the Bills' running game with 75.

Bills 17, Oilers 10

Buffalo was the AFC's leading defensive team and impossible to beat at home in Rich Stadium (8-0 during the regular season). Nothing changed as the Bills held an opponent to 10 points or fewer for the seventh time this season.

"Unfortunately, a very good football team isn't going to play anymore," losing head coach Jerry Glanville said. "That's the problem with the playoffs. It's great to get in, and it hurts so much to get pushed out."

Bills defenders doing the major share of pushing were safety Leonard Smith, who blocked a punt to set up the game's first touchdown; end Bruce Smith, who blocked a field goal; safety Mark Kelso, who returned an interception 28 yards to set up a field goal; and the duo of special teams player Steve Tasker and linebacker Ray Bentley, who combined on a recovered punt fumble.

The Oilers had driven 80 yards to Mike Rozier's one-yard fourth-quarter touchdown run, and, trailing 17-10, forced the Bills to punt with two minutes left. However, when Curtis Duncan caught the ball, he was hit by Tasker, fumbled, and Bentley recovered at the Houston 18. The Bills ran out the clock.

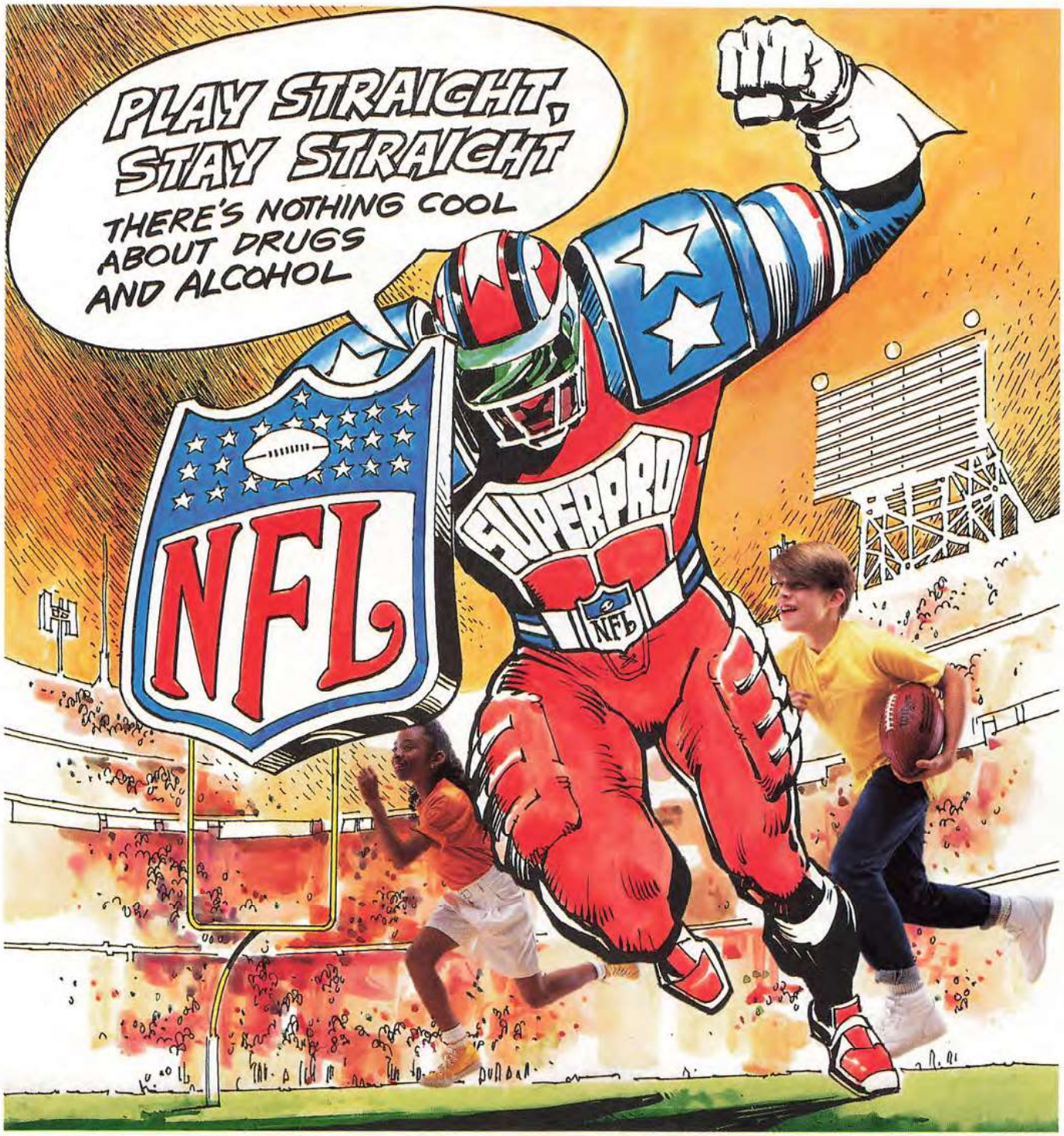
On offense, the Bills' Jim Kelly passed for 244 yards, and rookie Thurman Thomas ran for 75 and a score. ◆

GREG TROTT

Craig and Jerry Rice (80)

GEORGE GOJKOVICH

Dave Krieg suffered two sacks and two interceptions.



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WEEK 19 JANUARY 8

IN 1987, THE CINCINNATI Bengals finished last in the AFC Central Division.

A year later, they were on their way to the Super Bowl.

"It's just a great story," Bengals quarterback Boomer Esiason said. "But it's an unfinished one right now, and hopefully we can snatch a victory in Miami."

Esiason and the Bengals earned a trip to Miami and Super Bowl XXIII by outplaying Buffalo 21-10 in the AFC Championship Game.

Three hours later, in the NFC title game, the 49ers joined them in the Super Bowl with a surprisingly easy 28-3 victory over the Bears in ice-cold Chicago.

Al Messerschmidt

Ickey Woods opened the scoring late in the first quarter as he drove into linebacker Ray Bentley (50).

The victories set up a rematch of Super Bowl XVI (San Francisco 26, Cincinnati 21). The 49ers' win also sent them to their third Super Bowl in the 1980s.

By beating the Bills in Riverfront Stadium, Cincinnati finished 10-0 at home.

"They weren't going to beat us here," Esiason said. "No one was gonna beat us here."

That's the way a lot of people felt about the Bears, too, because they were playing at home against a team from the West Coast. The Soldier Field scoreboard said it was "Bearrr Weather." But Joe Montana threw two early touchdown passes to Jerry Rice, and the 49ers, who won six of their last seven games, never looked back.

How cold was it? The temperature was 17 degrees at kickoff, the wind gusted up to 30 mph, and the wind-chill factor was minus 26 degrees.

Bengals 21, Bills 10

The Bengals had defeated the Bills 35-21 in November, which helped them gain home-field advantage in the championship game, a good thing, too, because the Bills finished 9-0 in *their* stadium.

Cincinnati won the AFC championship with a ball-control offense, an outstanding defense, and some clutch punting by Lee Johnson, who put three of his six kicks inside the Bills' 20.

On offense, rookie Ickey Woods ran for more than 100 yards for the second consecutive week, gaining 102 on 29 carries and scoring twice on one-yard runs. Esiason completed only 11 passes for 94 yards, but one of them was a 10-yard touchdown lob to running back James Brooks.

On defense, the Bengals intercepted Buffalo's Jim Kelly three times, sacked him three times, and held him and his teammates to 181 yards and 10 first downs. Cincinnati cornerback Eric Thomas set up the game's first touchdown with a 26-yard interception return to the Bills' 19, and safety David Fulcher stopped Buffalo's final threat in the fourth quarter when he intercepted Kelly's fourth-down pass from the Bengals' 17 in the end zone.

Paul Spinelli/NFLP

With a great catch and an even-better move, Jerry Rice turned a 19-yard pass into a long touchdown.

"We [the Bengals' defense] wanted to go out and earn a little respect," said cornerback Lewis Billups, who also had an interception. "All week everyone was talking about our offense and their defense. It was like we were just out there for the ride."

The game stayed close and tense much of the way, however, because the Bills' defense, despite having three starters in and out of the lineup with injuries, kept turning the Bengals back. Kelly got Buffalo a 7-7 second-quarter tie when he threw a nine-yard touchdown pass to Andre Reed, and Scott Norwood kicked a 39-yard field goal to make it 14-10 at halftime.

But Cincinnati dominated the second half, taking control with a 39-yard touchdown drive on which Stanley Wilson ran for six yards and a first down on a fourth-down fake-punt play at Buffalo's 33. Several plays later, Woods scored the final touchdown.

49ers 28, Bears 3

"This could have been Joe's greatest game, under the pressure and in these conditions," 49ers head coach Bill Walsh said of quarterback Montana's 288-yard, three-touchdown game.

And what Montana threw, Rice was sure to catch. Rice finished with five receptions for 133 yards, including 61- and 27-yard scoring plays that produced a 14-0 lead.

On his first touchdown, Rice jumped to catch the ball at the Bears' 42, came down, eluded cornerback Mike Richardson and backup safety Todd Krumm, and sprinted to the end zone.

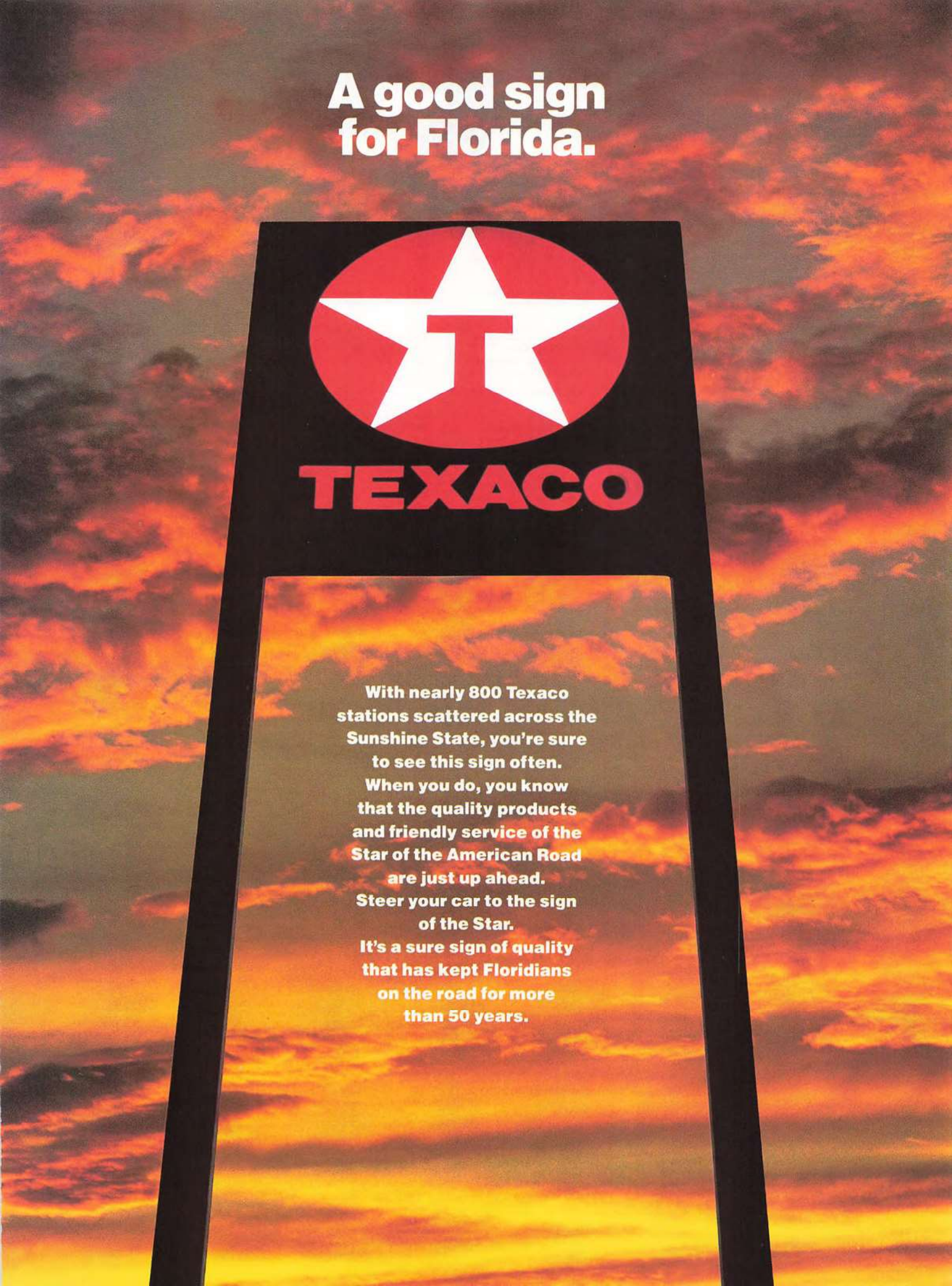
On his second, he broke over the middle, reached down to his knees to catch the ball at the Bears' 15, and went in to score again.

"The wind was taking the ball all day," Rice said, "but, once it's in the air, you have to make a play on it."

Leading 14-3 at halftime, the 49ers drove 78 yards with the second-half kickoff and scored on Montana's five-yard pass to tight end John Frank.

In the bad weather, the 49ers not only outgained the Bears 406-267, but committed no penalties, turned the ball over only once, and drove 62 yards or more on all four of their scoring drives. The Bears moved inside San Francisco's 40 just twice. ◆

A good sign for Florida.



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1988 REPLAY

STATISTICS

AFC LEADING RUSHERS

	Att.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TD
Eric Dickerson, Ind.	388	1659	4.3	41	14
John Stephens, N.E.	297	1168	3.9	52	4
Gary Anderson, San Diego	225	1119	5.0	36	3
Ickey Woods, Cincinnati	203	1066	5.3	56	15
Curt Warner, Seattle	266	1025	3.9	29	10
Mike Rozier, Houston	251	1002	4.0	28	10
Freeman McNeil, N.Y. Jets	219	944	4.3	28	6
James Brooks, Cincinnati	182	931	5.1	51	8
Thurman Thomas, Buffalo	207	881	4.3	37	2
John L. Williams, Seattle	189	877	4.6	44	4
Marcus Allen, L.A. Raiders	223	831	3.7	32	7

NFC LEADING RUSHERS

	Att.	Yards	Avg.	Long	TD
Herschel Walker, Dallas	361	1514	4.2	38	5
Roger Craig, San Francisco	310	1502	4.8	46	9
Greg Bell, L.A. Rams	288	1212	4.2	44	16
Neal Anderson, Chicago	249	1106	4.4	80	12
Joe Morris, N.Y. Giants	307	1083	3.5	27	5
John Settle, Atlanta	232	1024	4.4	62	7
Earl Ferrell, Phoenix	202	924	4.6	47	7
Dalton Hilliard, New Orleans	204	823	4.0	36	5
Stump Mitchell, Phoenix	164	726	4.4	47	4
Rueben Mayes, New Orleans	170	628	3.7	21	3

AFC LEADING SCORERS, TOUCHDOWNS

	TD	Rush.	Rec.	Ret.	Pts.
Eric Dickerson, Ind.	15	14	1	0	90
Ickey Woods, Cincinnati	15	15	0	0	90
James Brooks, Cincinnati	14	8	6	0	84
Mark Clayton, Miami	14	0	14	0	84
Robb Riddick, Buffalo	14	12	1	1	84
Lorenzo Hampton, Miami	12	9	3	0	72
Curt Warner, Seattle	12	10	2	0	72
Mike Rozier, Houston	11	10	1	0	66
Johnny Hector, N.Y. Jets	10	10	0	0	60
Drew Hill, Houston	10	0	10	0	60

NFC LEADING SCORERS, TOUCHDOWNS

	TD	Rush.	Rec.	Ret.	Pts.
Greg Bell, L.A. Rams	18	16	2	0	108
Neal Anderson, Chicago	12	12	0	0	72
Ricky Sanders, Washington	12	0	12	0	72
Keith Byars, Philadelphia	10	6	4	0	60
Roger Craig, San Francisco	10	9	1	0	60
Henry Ellard, L.A. Rams	10	0	10	0	60
Jerry Rice, San Francisco	10	1	9	0	60
Earl Ferrell, Phoenix	9	7	2	0	54
Bruce Hill, Tampa Bay	9	0	9	0	54

AFC LEADING SCORERS, KICKING

	PAT	FG	Long	Pts.
Scott Norwood, Buffalo	33/33	32/37	49	129
Gary Anderson, Pittsburgh	34/35	28/36	52	118
Dean Biasucci, Indianapolis	39/40	25/32	53	114
Tony Zendejas, Houston	48/50	22/34	52	114
Pat Leahy, N.Y. Jets	43/43	23/28	48	112
Norm Johnson, Seattle	39/39	22/28	47	105
Rich Karlis, Denver	36/37	23/36	51	105
Matt Bahr, Cleveland	32/33	24/29	47	104
Nick Lowery, Kansas City	23/23	27/32	51	104

NFC LEADING SCORERS, KICKING

	PAT	FG	Long	Pts.
Mike Cofer, S.F.	40/41	27/38	52	121
Carney Lansford, L.A. Rams	45/48	24/32	49	117
Morten Andersen, N.O.	32/33	26/36	51	110
Chuck Nelson, Minnesota	48/49	20/25	49	108
Chip Lohmiller, Wash.	40/41	19/26	46	97
Luis Zendejas, Dallas, Phil.	35/36	20/27	50	95
Kevin Butler, Chicago	37/38	15/19	45	82
Greg Davis, Atlanta	25/27	19/30	52	82
Eddie Murray, Detroit	22/23	20/21	48	82

AFC LEADING RECEIVERS

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Al Toon, N.Y. Jets	93	1067	11.5	42	5
Mark Clayton, Miami	86	1129	13.1	45	14
Drew Hill, Houston	72	1141	15.8	57	10
Andre Reed, Buffalo	71	968	13.6	65	6
Mickey Shuler, N.Y. Jets	70	805	11.5	42	5
Vance Johnson, Denver	68	896	13.2	86	5
Stephone Paige, Kansas City	61	902	14.8	49	7
Ernest Givins, Houston	60	976	16.3	46	5
Earnest Byner, Cleve. (RB)	59	576	9.8	39	2

AFC PASSING LEADERS

	Att.	Comp.	Pct. Comp.	Yds.	Avg. Gain	TD	Pct. TD	Long	Int.	Pct. Int.	Rating
Boomer Esiason, Cincinnati	388	223	57.5	3572	9.21	28	7.2	86	14	3.6	97.4
Dave Krieg, Seattle	228	134	58.8	1741	7.64	18	7.9	75	8	3.5	94.6
Warren Moon, Houston	294	160	54.4	2327	7.91	17	5.8	57	8	2.7	88.4
Bernie Kosar, Cleveland	259	156	60.2	1890	7.30	10	3.9	77	7	2.7	84.3
Dan Marino, Miami	606	354	58.4	4434	7.32	28	4.6	80	23	3.8	80.8
Ken O'Brien, N.Y. Jets	424	236	55.7	2567	6.05	15	3.5	50	7	1.7	78.6
Jim Kelly, Buffalo	452	269	59.5	3380	7.48	15	3.3	66	17	3.8	78.2
Steve DeBerg, Kansas City	414	224	54.1	2935	7.09	16	3.9	80	16	3.9	73.5
John Elway, Denver	496	274	55.2	3309	6.67	17	3.4	86	19	3.8	71.4
Chris Chandler, Indianapolis	233	129	55.4	1619	6.95	8	3.4	54	12	5.2	67.2
Steve Beuerlein, L.A. Raiders	238	105	44.1	1643	6.90	8	3.4	57	7	2.9	66.6

NFC PASSING LEADERS

	Att.	Comp.	Pct. Comp.	Yds.	Avg. Gain	TD	Pct. TD	Long	Int.	Pct. Int.	Rating
Wade Wilson, Minnesota	332	204	61.4	2746	8.27	15	4.5	68	9	2.7	91.5
Jim Everett, L.A. Rams	517	308	59.6	3964	7.67	31	6.0	69	18	3.5	89.2
Joe Montana, San Francisco	397	238	59.9	2981	7.51	18	4.5	96	10	2.5	87.9
Neil Lomax, Phoenix	443	255	57.6	3395	7.66	20	4.5	93	11	2.5	86.7
Phil Simms, N.Y. Giants	479	263	54.9	3359	7.01	21	4.4	62	11	2.3	82.1
Bobby Hebert, New Orleans	478	280	58.6	3156	6.60	20	4.2	40	15	3.1	79.3
Randall Cunningham, Phil.	560	301	53.8	3808	6.80	24	4.3	80	16	2.9	77.6
Doug Williams, Washington	380	213	56.1	2609	6.87	15	3.9	58	12	3.2	77.4
Steve Pelluer, Dallas	435	245	56.3	3139	7.22	17	3.9	61	19	4.4	73.9
Don Majkowski, Green Bay	336	178	53.0	2119	6.31	9	2.7	56	11	3.3	67.8
Chris Miller, Atlanta	351	184	52.4	2133	6.08	11	3.1	68	12	3.4	67.3

Jim Jensen, Miami	58	652	11.2	31	5
John L. Williams, Seattle (RB)	58	651	11.2	75	3
Reggie Langhorne, Cleve.	57	780	13.7	77	7
Troy Stradford, Miami (RB)	56	426	7.6	36	1

NFC LEADING RECEIVERS

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Henry Ellard, L.A. Rams	86	1414	16.4	68	10
Eric Martin, New Orleans	85	1083	12.7	t40	7
J.T. Smith, Phoenix	83	986	11.9	29	5
Keith Jackson, Phil.	81	869	10.7	41	6
Roger Craig, S.F. (RB)	76	534	7.0	22	1
Ricky Sanders	73	1148	15.7	t55	12
Anthony Carter, Minnesota	72	1225	17.0	t67	6
Art Monk, Washington	72	946	13.1	t46	5
Keith Byars, Phil. (RB)	72	705	9.8	t37	4
Roy Green, Phoenix	68	1097	16.1	52	7
John Settle, Atlanta (RB)	68	570	8.4	27	1
Lonzell Hill, New Orleans	66	703	10.7	35	7

AFC LEADING PUNTERS

	No.	Yards	Long	Avg.
Harry Newsome, Pittsburgh	65	2950	62	45.4
Ralf Mojsiejenko, San Diego	85	3745	62	44.1
Mike Horan, Denver	65	2861	70	44.0
Rohn Stark, Indianapolis	64	2784	65	43.5
Reggie Roby, Miami	64	2754	64	43.0
Jeff Gossett, L.A. Raiders	91	3804	58	41.8
Ruben Rodriguez, Seattle	70	2858	68	40.8
Kelly Goodburn, Kansas City	76	3059	59	40.3
Max Runager, S.F., Clev.	49	1959	52	40.0

NFC LEADING PUNTERS

	No.	Yards	Long	Avg.
Jim Arnold, Detroit	97	4110	69	42.4
Bryan Wagner, Chicago	79	3282	70	41.5
Maury Buford, N.Y. Giants	73	3012	66	41.3
Mike Saxon, Dallas	80	3271	55	40.9
Greg Horne, Phoenix	79	3228	66	40.9
Brian Hansen, New Orleans	72	2913	64	40.5
John Teltschik, Philadelphia	98	3958	70	40.4
Bucky Scribner, Minnesota	84	3387	55	40.3
Rick Donnelly, Atlanta	98	3920	61	40.0

AFC LEADING PUNT RETURNERS

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
JoJo Townsell, N.Y. Jets	35	409	11.7	59	1
Clarence Verdin, Indianapolis	22	239	10.9	73	1
Irving Fryar, New England	38	398	10.5	30	0
Lionel James, San Diego	28	278	9.9	24	0
Bobby Joe Edmonds, Seattle	35	340	9.7	41	0
Ricky Nattiel, Denver	23	223	9.7	24	0
Scott Schwedes, Miami	24	230	9.6	36	0
Tim Brown, L.A. Raiders	49	444	9.1	36	0

NFC LEADING PUNT RETURNERS

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
John Taylor, San Francisco	44	556	12.6	95	2
Mel Gray, New Orleans	25	305	12.2	66	1
Bobby Futrell, Tampa Bay	27	283	10.5	40	0
Vai Sikahema, Phoenix	33	341	10.3	28	0
Leo Lewis, Minnesota	58	550	9.5	64	0
Lew Barnes, Atlanta	34	307	9.0	68	0
Kelvin Martin, Dallas	44	360	8.2	21	0
Dennis McKinnon, Chicago	34	277	8.1	23	0

AFC LEADING KICKOFF RETURNERS

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Tim Brown, L.A. Raiders	41	1098	26.8	97	1
Jamie Holland, San Diego	31	810	26.1	94	1
Anthony Miller, San Diego	25	648	25.9	93	1
Bobby Humphery, N.Y. Jets	21	510	24.3	48	0
Sammy Martin, New England	31	735	23.7	95	1
Rod Woodson, Pittsburgh	37	850	23.0	92	1
Bobby Joe Edmonds, Seattle	40	900	22.5	65	0
Glen Young, Cleveland	29	635	21.9	34	0

NFC LEADING KICKOFF RETURNERS

	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Donnie Elder, Tampa Bay	34	772	22.7	51	0
Cornell Burbage, Dallas	20	448	22.4	53	0
Darryl Clack, Dallas	32	690	21.6	40	0
Dennis Gentry, Chicago	27	578	21.4	51	0
Darryl Harris, Minnesota	39	833	21.4	30	0
Gene Atkins, New Orleans	20	424	21.2	57	0
Mel Gray, New Orleans	32	670	20.9	39	0
Vai Sikahema, Phoenix	23	475	20.7	39	0

AFC LEADING INTERCEPTORS

	No.	Yards	Long	TD
Erik McMillan, N.Y. Jets	8	168	55	2
Mark Kelso, Buffalo	7	180	78	1
Gill Byrd, San Diego	7	82	42	0
Eric Thomas, Cincinnati	7	61	37	0
Deron Cherry, Kansas City	7	51	24	0
Paul Moyer, Seattle	6	79	34	0
Felix Wright, Cleveland	5	126	53	0
Terry Taylor, Seattle	5	53	27	0
David Fulcher, Cincinnati	5	38	16	0

NFC LEADING INTERCEPTORS

	No.	Yards	Long	TD
Scott Case, Atlanta	10	47	12	0
Carl Lee, Minnesota	8	118	58	0
Terry Hoage, Philadelphia	8	116	38	0
Vestee Jackson, Chicago	8	94	46	0
Tim McKyer, San Francisco	7	11	7	0
Harry Hamilton, Tampa Bay	6	123	58	0
Eric Allen, Philadelphia	5	76	21	0

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1988 REPLAY

AFC RESULTS AND STANDINGS

BUFFALO BILLS

Sept. 4	MINNESOTA	13-10
Sept. 11	MIAMI	9-6
Sept. 18	at New England	16-14
Sept. 25	PITTSBURGH	36-28
Oct. 2	at Chicago	3-24
Oct. 9	INDIANAPOLIS	34-23
Oct. 17	at N.Y. Jets (Mon.)	37-14
Oct. 23	NEW ENGLAND	23-20
Oct. 30	GREEN BAY	28-0
Nov. 6	at Seattle	13-3
Nov. 14	at Miami (Mon.)	31-6
Nov. 20	N.Y. JETS*	9-6
Nov. 27	at Cincinnati	21-35
Dec. 4	at Tampa Bay	5-10
Dec. 11	L.A. RAIDERS	37-21
Dec. 18	at Indianapolis	14-17
W12 L4		**329-237**

CINCINNATI BENGALS

Sept. 4	PHOENIX	21-14
Sept. 11	at Philadelphia	28-24
Sept. 18	at Pittsburgh	17-12
Sept. 25	CLEVELAND	24-17
Oct. 2	at L.A. Raiders	45-21
Oct. 9	N.Y. JETS	36-19
Oct. 16	at New England	21-27
Oct. 23	HOUSTON	44-21
Oct. 30	at Cleveland	16-23
Nov. 6	PITTSBURGH	42-7
Nov. 13	at Kansas City	28-31
Nov. 20	at Dallas	38-24
Nov. 27	BUFFALO	35-21
Dec. 4	SAN DIEGO	27-10
Dec. 11	at Houston	6-41
Dec. 17	WASHINGTON (Sat.)*	20-17
W12 L4		**448-329**

CLEVELAND BROWNS

Sept. 4	at Kansas City	6-3
Sept. 11	N.Y. JETS	3-23
Sept. 19	INDIANAPOLIS (Mon.)	23-17
Sept. 25	at Cincinnati	17-24
Oct. 2	at Pittsburgh	23-9
Oct. 9	SEATTLE	10-16
Oct. 16	PHILADELPHIA	19-3
Oct. 23	at Phoenix	29-21
Oct. 30	CINCINNATI	23-16
Nov. 7	at Houston (Mon.)	17-24
Nov. 13	at Denver	7-30
Nov. 20	PITTSBURGH	27-7
Nov. 27	at Washington	17-13
Dec. 4	DALLAS	24-21
Dec. 12	at Miami (Mon.)	31-38
Dec. 18	HOUSTON	28-23
W10 L6		**304-288**

DENVER BRONCOS

Sept. 4	SEATTLE	14-21
Sept. 11	SAN DIEGO	34-3
Sept. 18	at Kansas City	13-20
Sept. 26	L.A. RAIDERS (Mon.)*	27-30
Oct. 2	at San Diego	12-0
Oct. 9	at San Francisco*	16-13
Oct. 16	ATLANTA	30-14
Oct. 23	at Pittsburgh	21-39
Oct. 31	at Indianapolis (Mon.)	23-55
Nov. 6	KANSAS CITY	17-11
Nov. 13	CLEVELAND	30-7
Nov. 20	at New Orleans	0-42
Nov. 27	L.A. RAMS	35-24
Dec. 4	at L.A. Raiders	20-21
Dec. 11	at Seattle (night)	14-42
Dec. 17	NEW ENGLAND (Sat.)	21-10
W8 L8		**327-352**

HOUSTON OILERS

Sept. 4	at Indianapolis*	17-14
Sept. 11	L.A. RAIDERS	38-35
Sept. 18	at N.Y. Jets	3-45
Sept. 25	NEW ENGLAND	31-6
Oct. 2	at Philadelphia	23-32
Oct. 9	KANSAS CITY	7-6
Oct. 16	at Pittsburgh	34-14
Oct. 23	at Cincinnati	21-44
Oct. 30	WASHINGTON (night)	41-17
Nov. 7	CLEVELAND (Mon.)	24-17
Nov. 13	at Seattle	24-27
Nov. 20	PHOENIX	38-20
Nov. 24	at Dallas (Thanks.)	25-17
Dec. 4	PITTSBURGH (night)	34-37
Dec. 11	CINCINNATI	41-6
Dec. 18	at Cleveland	23-28
W10 L6		**424-365**

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

Sept. 4	HOUSTON*	14-17
Sept. 11	CHICAGO	13-17
Sept. 19	at Cleveland (Mon.)	17-23
Sept. 25	MIAMI	15-13
Oct. 2	at New England	17-21
Oct. 9	at Buffalo	23-34
Oct. 16	TAMPA BAY	35-31
Oct. 23	at San Diego	16-0
Oct. 31	DENVER (Mon.)	55-23
Nov. 6	N.Y. JETS	38-14
Nov. 13	at Green Bay	20-13
Nov. 20	at Minnesota	3-12
Nov. 27	NEW ENGLAND	24-21
Dec. 4	at Miami	31-28
Dec. 10	at N.Y. Jets (Sat.)	16-34
Dec. 18	BUFFALO	17-14
W9 L7		**354-315**

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Sept. 4	CLEVELAND	3-6
Sept. 11	at Seattle	10-31
Sept. 18	DENVER	20-13
Sept. 25	SAN DIEGO	23-24
Oct. 2	at N.Y. Jets*	17-17
Oct. 9	at Houston	6-7
Oct. 16	L.A. RAIDERS	17-27
Oct. 23	DETROIT	6-7
Oct. 30	at L.A. Raiders	10-17
Nov. 6	at Denver	11-17
Nov. 13	CINCINNATI	31-28
Nov. 20	SEATTLE	27-24
Nov. 27	at Pittsburgh	10-16
Dec. 4	N.Y. JETS	38-34
Dec. 11	at N.Y. Giants	12-28
Dec. 18	at San Diego	13-24
W4 L11 T1		**254-320**

LOS ANGELES RAIDERS

Sept. 4	SAN DIEGO	24-13
Sept. 11	at Houston	35-38
Sept. 18	L.A. RAMS	17-22
Sept. 26	at Denver (Mon.)*	30-27
Oct. 2	CINCINNATI	21-45
Oct. 9	MIAMI	14-24
Oct. 16	at Kansas City	27-17
Oct. 23	at New Orleans	6-20
Oct. 30	KANSAS CITY	17-10
Nov. 6	at San Diego (night)	13-3
Nov. 13	at San Francisco	9-3
Nov. 20	ATLANTA	6-12
Nov. 28	at Seattle (Mon.)	27-35
Dec. 4	DENVER	21-20
Dec. 11	at Buffalo	21-37
Dec. 18	SEATTLE	37-43
W7 L9		**325-369**

MIAMI DOLPHINS

Sept. 4	at Chicago	7-34
Sept. 11	at Buffalo	6-9
Sept. 18	GREEN BAY	24-17
Sept. 25	at Indianapolis	13-15
Oct. 2	MINNESOTA	24-7
Oct. 9	at L.A. Raiders	24-14
Oct. 16	SAN DIEGO	31-28
Oct. 23	N.Y. JETS	30-44
Oct. 30	at Tampa Bay	17-14
Nov. 6	at New England	10-21
Nov. 14	BUFFALO (Mon.)	6-31
Nov. 20	NEW ENGLAND (night)	3-6
Nov. 27	at N.Y. Jets	34-38
Dec. 4	INDIANAPOLIS	28-31
Dec. 12	CLEVELAND (Mon.)	38-31
Dec. 18	at Pittsburgh	24-40
W6 L10		**319-380**

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

Sept. 4	N.Y. JETS	28-3
Sept. 11	at Minnesota	6-36
Sept. 18	BUFFALO	14-16
Sept. 25	at Houston	6-31
Oct. 2	INDIANAPOLIS	21-17
Oct. 9	vs. Green Bay at Milw.	3-45
Oct. 16	CINCINNATI	27-21
Oct. 23	at Buffalo	20-23
Oct. 30	CHICAGO	30-7
Nov. 6	MIAMI	21-10
Nov. 13	at N.Y. Jets	14-13
Nov. 20	at Miami (night)	6-3
Nov. 27	at Indianapolis	21-24
Dec. 4	SEATTLE	13-7
Dec. 11	TAMPA BAY*	10-7
Dec. 17	at Denver (Sat.)	10-21
W9 L7		**250-284**

NEW YORK JETS

Sept. 4	at New England	3-28
Sept. 11	at Cleveland	23-3
Sept. 18	HOUSTON	45-3
Sept. 25	at Detroit	17-10
Oct. 2	KANSAS CITY*	17-17
Oct. 9	at Cincinnati	19-36
Oct. 17	BUFFALO (Mon.)	14-37
Oct. 23	at Miami	44-30
Oct. 30	PITTSBURGH	24-20
Nov. 6	at Indianapolis	14-38
Nov. 13	NEW ENGLAND	13-14
Nov. 20	at Buffalo*	6-9
Nov. 27	MIAMI	38-34
Dec. 4	at Kansas City	34-38
Dec. 10	INDIANAPOLIS (Sat.)	34-16
Dec. 18	N.Y. GIANTS	27-21
W8 L7 T1		**372-354**

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

Sept. 4	DALLAS	24-21
Sept. 11	at Washington	29-30
Sept. 18	CINCINNATI	12-17
Sept. 25	at Buffalo	28-36
Oct. 2	CLEVELAND	9-23
Oct. 9	at Phoenix	14-31
Oct. 16	HOUSTON	14-34
Oct. 23	DENVER	39-21
Oct. 30	at N.Y. Jets	20-24
Nov. 6	at Cincinnati	7-42
Nov. 13	PHILADELPHIA	26-27
Nov. 20	at Cleveland	7-27
Nov. 27	KANSAS CITY	16-10
Dec. 4	at Houston (night)	37-34
Dec. 11	at San Diego	14-20
Dec. 18	MIAMI	40-24
W5 L11		**336-421**

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

Sept. 4	at L.A. Raiders	13-24
Sept. 11	at Denver	3-34
Sept. 18	SEATTLE	17-6
Sept. 25	at Kansas City	24-23
Oct. 2	DENVER	0-12
Oct. 9	NEW ORLEANS	17-23
Oct. 16	at Miami	28-31
Oct. 23	INDIANAPOLIS	0-16
Oct. 30	at Seattle	14-17
Nov. 6	L.A. RAIDERS (night)	3-13
Nov. 13	at Atlanta	10-7
Nov. 20	at L.A. Rams	38-24
Nov. 27	SAN FRANCISCO	10-48
Dec. 4	at Cincinnati	10-27
Dec. 11	PITTSBURGH	20-14
Dec. 18	KANSAS CITY	24-13
W6 L10		**231-332**

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Sept. 4	at Denver	21-14
Sept. 11	KANSAS CITY	31-10
Sept. 18	at San Diego	6-17
Sept. 25	SAN FRANCISCO	7-38
Oct. 2	at Atlanta	31-20
Oct. 9	at Cleveland	16-10
Oct. 16	NEW ORLEANS	19-20
Oct. 23	at L.A. Rams	10-31
Oct. 30	SAN DIEGO	17-14
Nov. 6	BUFFALO	3-13
Nov. 13	HOUSTON	27-24
Nov. 20	at Kansas City	24-27
Nov. 28	L.A. RAIDERS (Mon.)	35-27
Dec. 4	at New England	7-13
Dec. 11	DENVER (night)	42-14
Dec. 18	at L.A. Raiders	43-37
W9 L7		**339-329**

1988 AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE STANDINGS

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Buffalo	12	4	0	.750	329	237
Indianapolis	9	7	0	.563	354	315
New England	9	7	0	.563	250	284
N.Y. Jets	8	7	1	.532	372	354
Miami	6	10	0	.375	319	380

Central Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Cincinnati	12	4	0	.750	448	329
Cleveland	10	6	0	.625	304	288
Houston	10	6	0	.625	424	365
Pittsburgh	5	11	0	.313	336	421

Western Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Seattle	9	7	0	.563	339	329
Denver	8	8	0	.500	327	352
L.A. Raiders	7	9	0	.438	325	369
San Diego	6	10	0	.375	231	332
Kansas City	4	11	1	.282	254	320

Wild Card Game
Houston 24, Cleveland 23

Divisional Playoffs
Cincinnati 21, Seattle 13
Buffalo 17, Houston 10

Championship Game
Cincinnati 21, Buffalo 10

*Overtime

1988 REPLAY

NFC RESULTS AND STANDINGS

ATLANTA FALCONS

Sept. 4	at Detroit	17-31
Sept. 11	NEW ORLEANS	21-29
Sept. 18	at San Francisco	34-17
Sept. 25	at Dallas	20-26
Oct. 2	SEATTLE	20-31
Oct. 9	L.A. RAMS	0-33
Oct. 16	at Denver	14-30
Oct. 23	N.Y. GIANTS	16-23
Oct. 30	at Philadelphia	27-24
Nov. 6	GREEN BAY	20-0
Nov. 13	SAN DIEGO	7-10
Nov. 20	at L.A. Raiders	12-6
Nov. 27	TAMPA BAY	17-10
Dec. 4	SAN FRANCISCO	3-13
Dec. 11	at L.A. Rams	7-22
Dec. 18	at New Orleans	9-10
W5 L11		**244-315**

CHICAGO BEARS

Sept. 4	MIAMI	34-7
Sept. 11	at Indianapolis	17-13
Sept. 18	MINNESOTA	7-31
Sept. 25	at Green Bay	24-6
Oct. 2	BUFFALO	24-3
Oct. 9	at Detroit	24-7
Oct. 16	DALLAS	17-7
Oct. 24	SAN FRANCISCO (Mon.)	10-9
Oct. 30	at New England	7-30
Nov. 6	TAMPA BAY	28-10
Nov. 13	at Washington	34-14
Nov. 20	at Tampa Bay	27-15
Nov. 27	GREEN BAY	16-0
Dec. 5	at L.A. Rams (Mon.)	3-23
Dec. 11	DETROIT	13-12
Dec. 19	at Minnesota (Mon.)	27-28
W12 L4		**312-215**

DALLAS COWBOYS

Sept. 4	at Pittsburgh	21-24
Sept. 12	at Phoenix (Mon.)	17-14
Sept. 18	N.Y. GIANTS	10-12
Sept. 25	ATLANTA	26-20
Oct. 3	at New Orleans (Mon.)	17-26
Oct. 9	WASHINGTON	17-35
Oct. 16	at Chicago	7-17
Oct. 23	at Philadelphia	23-24
Oct. 30	PHOENIX	10-16
Nov. 6	at N.Y. Giants	21-29
Nov. 13	MINNESOTA (night)	3-43
Nov. 20	CINCINNATI	24-38
Nov. 24	HOUSTON (Thanks.)	17-25
Dec. 4	at Cleveland	21-24
Dec. 11	at Washington	24-17
Dec. 18	PHILADELPHIA	7-23
W3 L13		**265-381**

DETROIT LIONS

Sept. 4	ATLANTA	31-17
Sept. 11	at L.A. Rams	10-17
Sept. 18	NEW ORLEANS	14-22
Sept. 25	N.Y. JETS	10-17
Oct. 2	at San Francisco	13-20
Oct. 9	CHICAGO	7-24
Oct. 16	at N.Y. Giants	10-30
Oct. 23	at Kansas City	7-6
Oct. 30	N.Y. GIANTS*	10-13
Nov. 6	at Minnesota	17-44
Nov. 13	TAMPA BAY	20-23
Nov. 20	vs. Green Bay at Milw.	19-9
Nov. 24	MINNESOTA (Thanks.)	0-23
Dec. 4	GREEN BAY	30-14
Dec. 11	at Chicago	12-13
Dec. 18	at Tampa Bay	10-21
W4 L12		**220-313**

GREEN BAY PACKERS

Sept. 4	L.A. RAMS	7-34
Sept. 11	TAMPA BAY	10-13
Sept. 18	at Miami	17-24
Sept. 25	CHICAGO	6-24
Oct. 2	at Tampa Bay	24-27
Oct. 9	NEW ENGLAND at Milw.	45-3
Oct. 16	at Minnesota	34-14
Oct. 23	WASHINGTON at Milw.	17-20
Oct. 30	at Buffalo	0-28
Nov. 6	at Atlanta	0-20
Nov. 13	INDIANAPOLIS	13-20
Nov. 20	DETROIT at Milw.	9-19
Nov. 27	at Chicago	0-16
Dec. 4	at Detroit	14-30
Dec. 11	MINNESOTA	18-6
Dec. 18	at Phoenix	26-17
W4 L12		**240-315**

LOS ANGELES RAMS

Sept. 4	at Green Bay	34-7
Sept. 11	DETROIT	17-10
Sept. 18	at L.A. Raiders	22-17
Sept. 25	at N.Y. Giants	45-31
Oct. 2	PHOENIX	27-41
Oct. 9	at Atlanta	33-0
Oct. 16	SAN FRANCISCO	21-24
Oct. 23	SEATTLE	31-10
Oct. 30	at New Orleans	12-10
Nov. 6	at Philadelphia	24-30
Nov. 13	NEW ORLEANS	10-14
Nov. 20	SAN DIEGO	24-38
Nov. 27	at Denver	24-35
Dec. 5	CHICAGO (Mon.)	23-3
Dec. 11	ATLANTA	22-7
Dec. 18	at San Francisco (night)	38-16
W10 L6		**407-293**

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

Sept. 4	at Buffalo	10-13
Sept. 11	NEW ENGLAND	36-6
Sept. 18	at Chicago	31-7
Sept. 25	PHILADELPHIA	23-21
Oct. 2	at Miami	7-24
Oct. 9	TAMPA BAY	14-13
Oct. 16	GREEN BAY	14-34
Oct. 23	at Tampa Bay	49-20
Oct. 30	at San Francisco	21-24
Nov. 6	DETROIT	44-17
Nov. 13	at Dallas (night)	43-3
Nov. 20	INDIANAPOLIS	12-3
Nov. 24	at Detroit (Thanks.)	23-0
Dec. 4	NEW ORLEANS	45-3
Dec. 11	at Green Bay	6-18
Dec. 19	CHICAGO (Mon.)	28-27
W11 L5		**406-233**

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

Sept. 4	SAN FRANCISCO	33-34
Sept. 11	at Atlanta	29-21
Sept. 18	at Detroit	22-14
Sept. 25	TAMPA BAY	13-9
Oct. 3	DALLAS (Mon.)	20-17
Oct. 9	at San Diego	23-17
Oct. 16	at Seattle	20-19
Oct. 23	L.A. RAIDERS	20-6
Oct. 30	L.A. RAMS	10-12
Nov. 6	at Washington	24-27
Nov. 13	at L.A. Rams	14-10
Nov. 20	DENVER	42-0
Nov. 27	N.Y. GIANTS (night)	12-13
Dec. 4	at Minnesota	3-45
Dec. 11	at San Francisco	17-30
Dec. 18	ATLANTA	10-9
W10 L6		**312-283**

NEW YORK GIANTS

Sept. 5	WASHINGTON (Mon.)	27-20
Sept. 11	SAN FRANCISCO	17-20
Sept. 18	at Dallas	12-10
Sept. 25	L.A. RAMS	31-45
Oct. 2	at Washington	24-23
Oct. 10	at Philadelphia (Mon.)	13-24
Oct. 16	DETROIT	30-10
Oct. 23	at Atlanta	23-16
Oct. 30	at Detroit*	13-10
Nov. 6	DALLAS	29-21
Nov. 13	at Phoenix	17-24
Nov. 20	PHILADELPHIA*	17-23
Nov. 27	at New Orleans (night)	13-12
Dec. 4	PHOENIX	44-7
Dec. 11	KANSAS CITY	28-12
Dec. 18	at N.Y. Jets	21-27
W10 L6		**359-304**

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

Sept. 4	at Tampa Bay	41-14
Sept. 11	CINCINNATI	24-28
Sept. 18	at Washington	10-17
Sept. 25	at Minnesota	21-23
Oct. 2	HOUSTON	32-23
Oct. 10	N.Y. GIANTS (Mon.)	24-13
Oct. 16	at Cleveland	3-19
Oct. 23	DALLAS	24-23
Oct. 30	ATLANTA	24-27
Nov. 6	L.A. RAMS	30-24
Nov. 13	at Pittsburgh	27-26
Nov. 20	at N.Y. Giants	17-23
Nov. 27	PHOENIX	31-21
Dec. 4	WASHINGTON	19-20
Dec. 10	at Phoenix (Sat.)	23-17
Dec. 18	at Dallas	23-7
W10 L6		**379-319**

PHOENIX CARDINALS

Sept. 4	at Cincinnati	14-21
Sept. 12	DALLAS (Mon.)	14-17
Sept. 18	at Tampa Bay	30-24
Sept. 25	WASHINGTON	30-21
Oct. 2	at L.A. Rams	41-27
Oct. 9	PITTSBURGH	31-14
Oct. 16	at Washington	17-33
Oct. 23	CLEVELAND	21-29
Oct. 30	at Dallas	16-10
Nov. 6	SAN FRANCISCO	24-23
Nov. 13	N.Y. GIANTS	24-17
Nov. 20	at Houston	20-38
Nov. 27	at Philadelphia	21-31
Dec. 4	at N.Y. Giants	7-44
Dec. 10	PHILADELPHIA (Sat.)	17-23
Dec. 18	GREEN BAY	17-26
W7 L9		**344-398**

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

Sept. 4	at New Orleans	34-33
Sept. 11	at N.Y. Giants	20-17
Sept. 18	ATLANTA	17-34
Sept. 25	at Seattle	38-7
Oct. 2	DETROIT	20-13
Oct. 9	DENVER*	13-16
Oct. 16	at L.A. Rams	24-21
Oct. 24	at Chicago (Mon.)	9-10
Oct. 30	MINNESOTA	24-21
Nov. 6	at Phoenix	23-24
Nov. 13	L.A. RAIDERS	3-9
Nov. 21	WASHINGTON (Mon.)	31-27
Nov. 27	at San Diego	48-10
Dec. 4	at Atlanta	13-3
Dec. 11	NEW ORLEANS	30-17
Dec. 18	L.A. RAMS (night)	16-38
W10 L6		**369-294**

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

Sept. 4	PHILADELPHIA	14-41
Sept. 11	at Green Bay	13-10
Sept. 18	PHOENIX	24-30
Sept. 25	at New Orleans	9-13
Oct. 2	GREEN BAY	27-24
Oct. 9	at Minnesota	13-14
Oct. 16	at Indianapolis	31-35
Oct. 23	MINNESOTA	20-49
Oct. 30	MIAMI	14-17
Nov. 6	at Chicago	10-28
Nov. 13	at Detroit	23-20
Nov. 20	CHICAGO	15-27
Nov. 27	at Atlanta	10-17
Dec. 4	BUFFALO	10-5
Dec. 11	at New England*	7-10
Dec. 18	DETROIT	21-10
W5 L11		**261-350**

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

Sept. 5	at N.Y. Giants (Mon.)	20-27
Sept. 11	PITTSBURGH	30-29
Sept. 18	PHILADELPHIA	17-10
Sept. 25	at Phoenix	21-30
Oct. 2	N.Y. GIANTS	23-24
Oct. 9	at Dallas	35-17
Oct. 16	PHOENIX	33-17
Oct. 23	vs. Green Bay at Milw.	20-17
Oct. 30	at Houston (night)	17-41
Nov. 6	NEW ORLEANS	27-24
Nov. 13	CHICAGO	14-34
Nov. 21	at San Francisco (Mon.)	21-37
Nov. 27	CLEVELAND	13-17
Dec. 4	at Philadelphia	20-19
Dec. 11	DALLAS	17-24
Dec. 17	at Cincinnati (Sat.)*	17-20
W7 L9		**345-387**

1988 NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE STANDINGS

Eastern Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Philadelphia	10	6	0	.625	379	319
N.Y. Giants	10	6	0	.625	359	304
Washington	7	9	0	.438	345	387
Phoenix	7	9	0	.438	344	398
Dallas	3	13	0	.188	265	381

Central Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
Chicago	12	4	0	.750	312	215
Minnesota	11	5	0	.687	406	233
Tampa Bay	5	11	0	.313	261	350
Detroit	4	12	0	.250	220	313
Green Bay	4	12	0	.250	240	315

Western Division

	W	L	T	Pct.	Pts.	OP
San Francisco	10	6	0	.625	369	294
L.A. Rams	10	6	0	.625	407	293
New Orleans	10	6	0	.625	312	283
Atlanta	5	11	0	.313	244	315

Wild Card Game
Minnesota 28, L.A. Rams 17

Divisional Playoffs
Chicago 20, Philadelphia 12
San Francisco 34, Minnesota 9

Championship Game
San Francisco 28, Chicago 3

*Overtime

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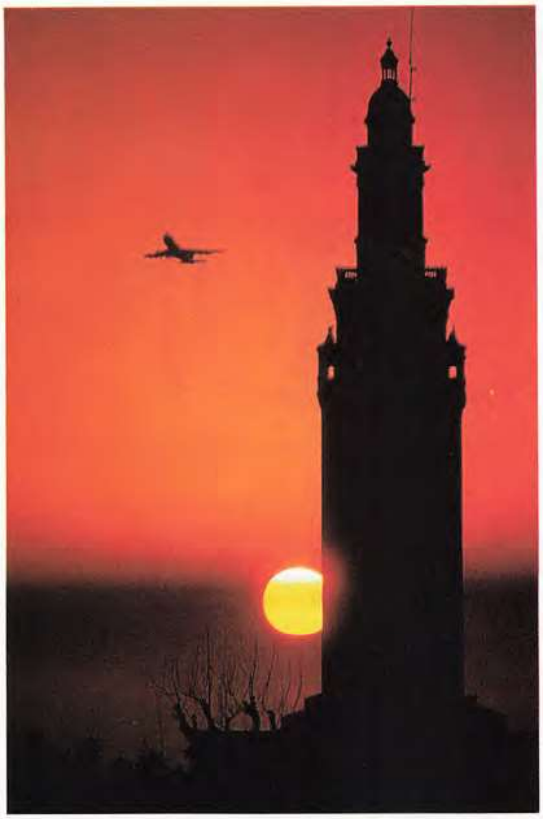
A PLACE IN THE FOOTBALL SUN

Photography by Al Messerschmidt

Every city on earth revolves around the sun, but Miami truly revolves around sunshine. Socially, economically, conceptually, Miami is directly dependent upon the sun's warm rays. Millions of tourists annually flock to South Florida, and even those who live there year-round take full advantage of the region's benevolent climate. Miami also serves as the United States' gateway to the Caribbean, and the islands have made a definite impact upon the city's culture, as have large black and Jewish communities. This ethnic potpourri and sunny environment, combined with a dedication to civic growth, has made Miami a vibrant, dazzling, and exotic metropolis.

Florida is flat as can be—the highest natural point in the state is a mere 345 feet. But Miami's stark, glass-and-steel downtown skyline stands tall along the waterfront.



SUN

Florida is famous for its sunsets—many would say they are the most spectacular in the continental U.S. The Freedom Tower (left) is transformed into a baroque silhouette during a particularly fiery Miami sunset.

Miami is an obvious attraction to northerners seeking to escape a chilly environment. Miami's tourist industry, a mainstay of the regional economy, brings in billions of dollars each year. Miami Beach (below) has the nation's greatest concentration of luxury hotels.

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SUN

The sabal palmetto palm (left) is Florida's state tree. Romance is not the official state pastime, but it often is raised to the level of an art form by vacationers and honeymooners.

The Port of Miami is endlessly busy in waterborne commerce, and is one of the largest cruise departure points in the world. The S.S. Norway (below) gets a rest on the edge of downtown.

An alligator (left), unique to the Gulf states, finds sanctuary in Everglades National Park, a swampy, virgin wilderness 40 miles south of Miami. Everglades is the nation's third-largest national park.

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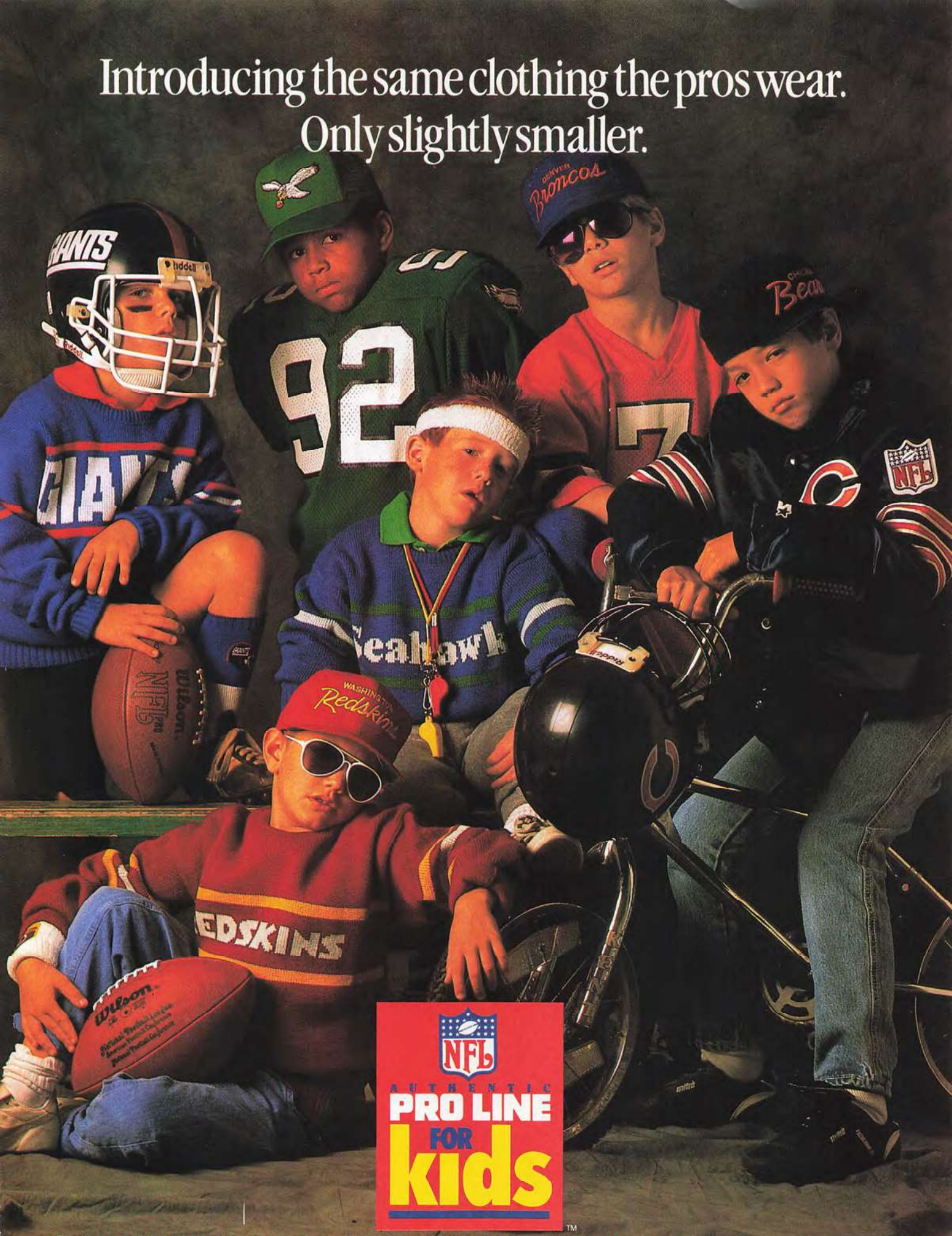
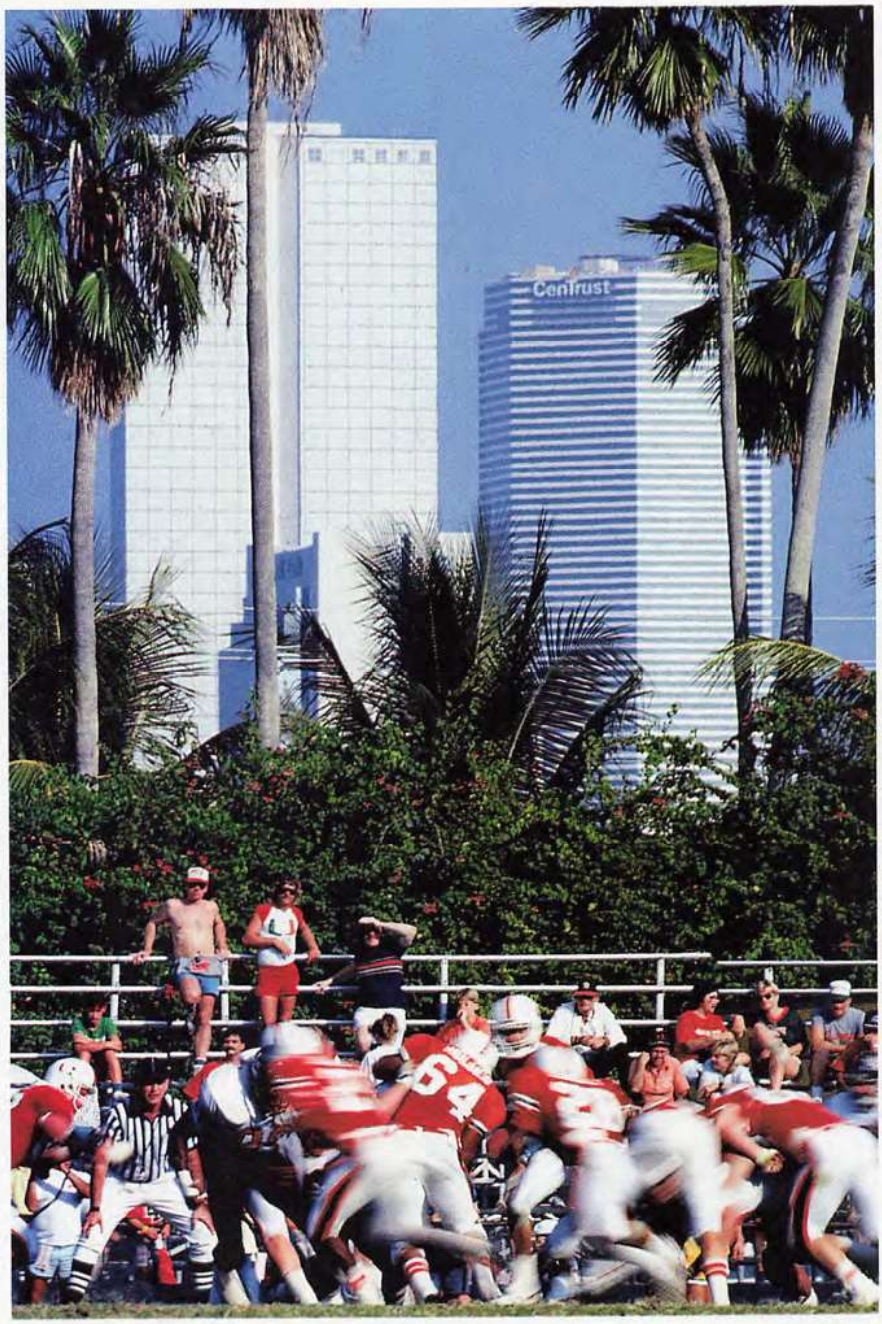


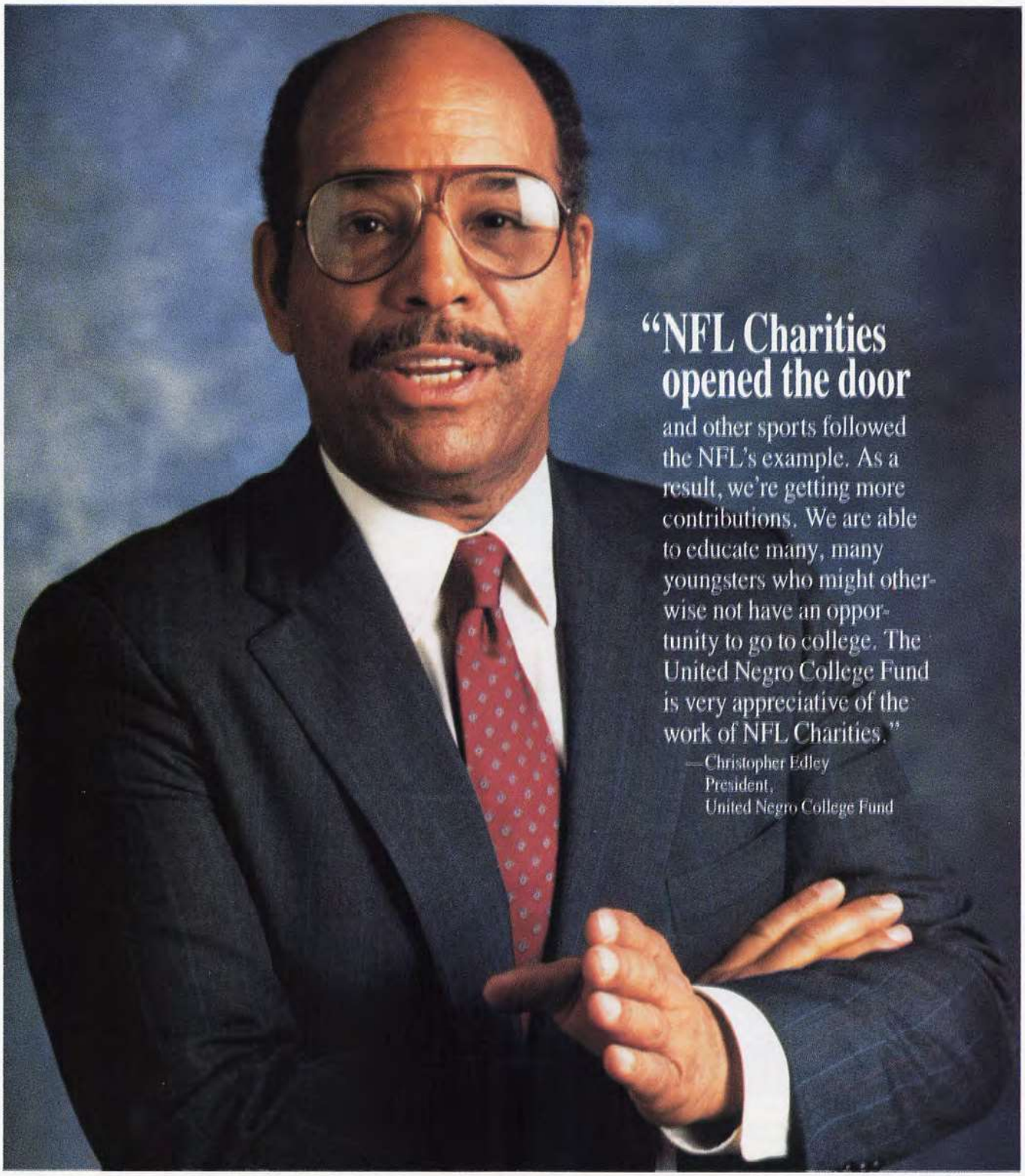
Finally, an NFL Pro Line for kids. The very same clothing worn on the field by the pros will soon be available for the pro of slightly smaller proportions. Look for the label in a store near you or write to NFL Properties, 410 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022, attention: Carol Lucas.

SUN

Commercial and recreational fishing both command great attention in peninsular Florida. Anglers on a wharf in Naples (left), a city situated on the Gulf of Mexico across the state from Miami, cast their last few lines in the waning sunlight.

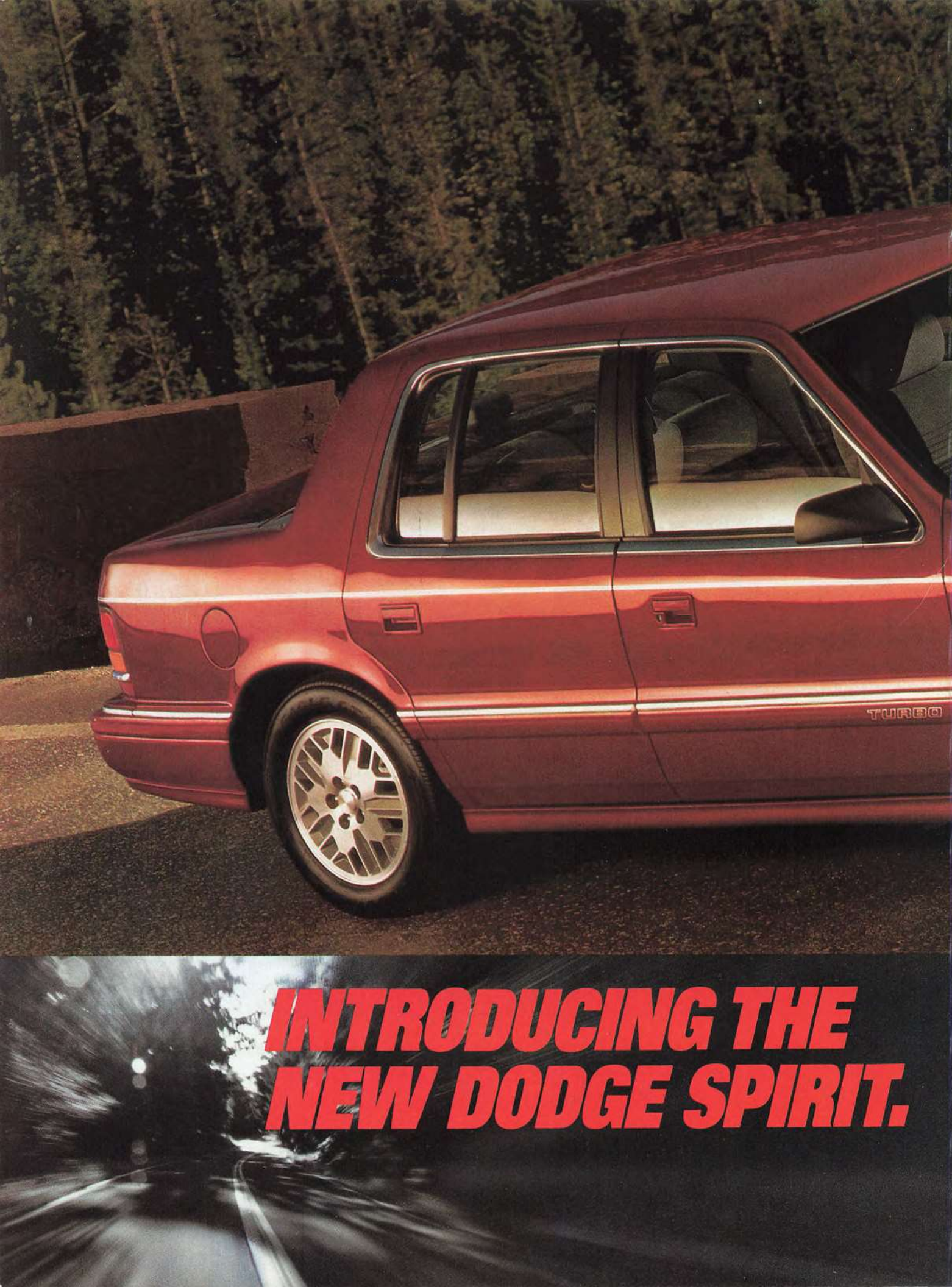
The University of Miami boasts one of college football's most powerful programs. The Hurricanes, who play in the Orange Bowl (right), won national championships in 1983 and 1987, and have produced such NFL stars as Cleveland's Bernie Kosar, Buffalo's Jim Kelly, Tampa Bay's Vinny Testaverde, and Cincinnati's Eddie Brown.




"NFL Charities opened the door
and other sports followed the NFL's example. As a result, we're getting more contributions. We are able to educate many, many youngsters who might otherwise not have an opportunity to go to college. The United Negro College Fund is very appreciative of the work of NFL Charities."
—Christopher Edley
President,
United Negro College Fund

Since 1974, NFL Charities has enabled the NFL owners collectively to make commitments totaling more than $8 million, including $3 million in support of America's colleges. The United Negro College Fund has received annual NFL grants that enable promising young people to pursue professional goals by completing their college educations. NFL Charities is committed to the nation's academic development, and the role our youth will play in the future of our country.

NFL CHARITIES



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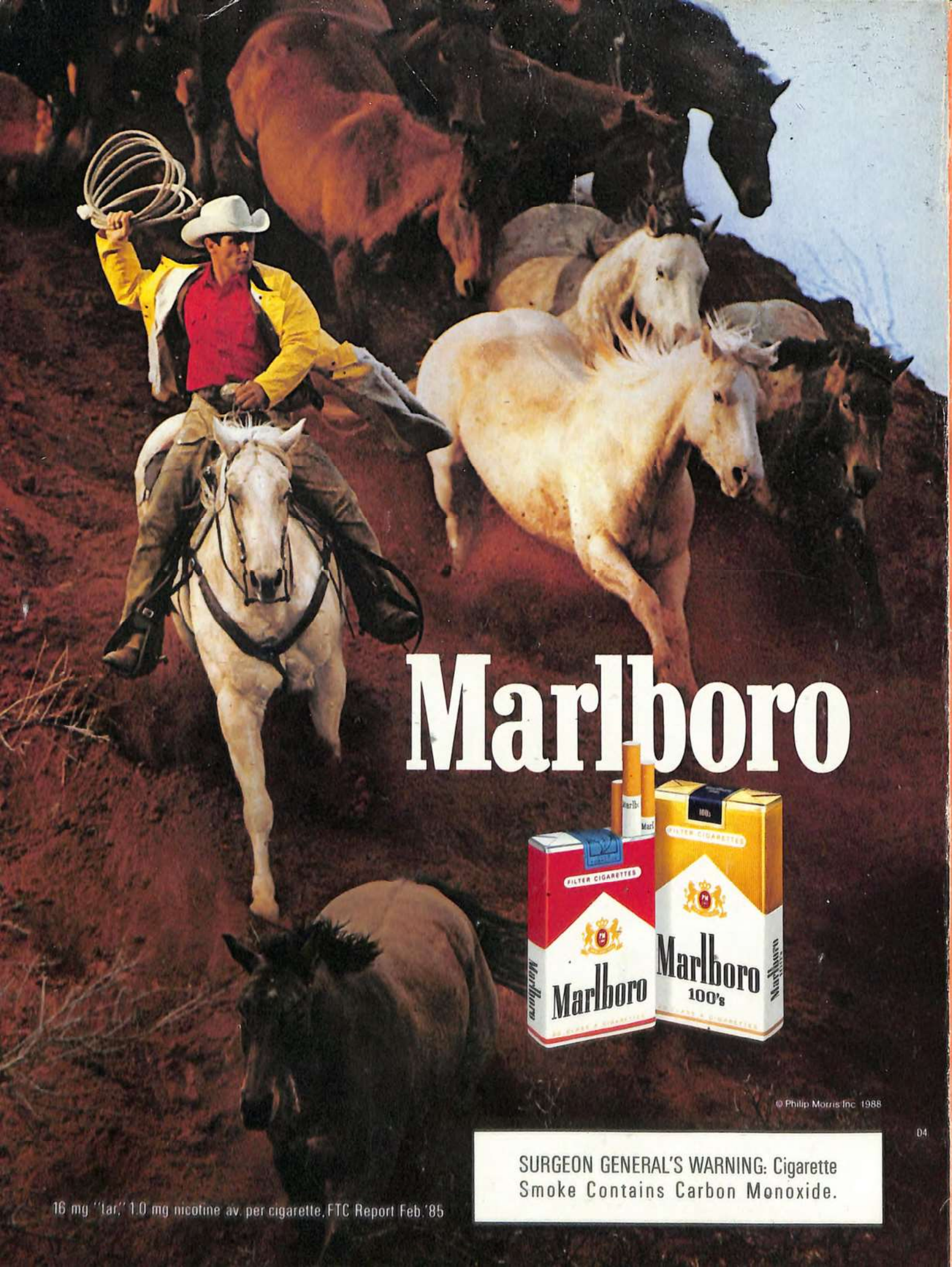

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